

SAINT PAULS.

FEBRUARY, 1871.

WILFRID CUMBERMEDE.

An Autobiographical Story.

By GEORGE MAC DONALD, AUTHOR OF "ALEC FORBES," ETC.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE LEADS.

THE moment Mrs. Wilson was gone, I expected to see Clara peep out from behind the tapestry in the corner; but as she did not appear, I lifted it, and looked in. There was nothing behind but a closet almost filled with books, not upon shelves but heaped up from floor to ceiling. There had been just room and no more for Clara to stand between the tapestry and the books. It was of no use attempting to look for her—at least I said so to myself, for as yet the attraction of an old book was equal to that of a young girl. Besides, I always enjoyed waiting—up to a certain point. Therefore I resumed my place on the floor, with the *Seven Champions* in one hand, and my chamber-candlestick in the other.

I had for the moment forgotten Clara in the adventures of St. Andrew of Scotland, when the *silking* of her frock aroused me. She was at my side.

"Well, you've had your dinner? Did she give you any dessert?"

"This is my dessert," I said, holding up the book. "It's far more than——"

"Far more than your desert," she pursued, "if you prefer it to me."

"I looked for you first," I said defensively.

"Where?"

"In the closet there."

"You didn't think I was going to wait there, did you? Why the very spiders are hanging dead in their own webs in there. But here's some dessert for you—if you're as fond of apples as most boys," she added, taking a small rosy-cheeked beauty from her pocket.

I accepted it, but somehow did not quite relish being lumped with boys in that fashion. As I ate it, which I should have felt bound to do even had it been less acceptable in itself, she resumed—

"Wouldn't you like to see the company arrive? That's what I came for. I wasn't going to ask Goody Wilson."

"Yes, I should," I answered; "but Mrs. Wilson told me to keep here, and not get in their way."

"Oh! I'll take care of that. We shan't go near them. I know every corner of the place—a good deal better than Mrs. Wilson. Come along, Wilfrid—that's your name, isn't it?"

"Yes, it is. Am I to call you Clara?"

"Yes, if you are good—that is if you like. I don't care what you call me. Come along."

I followed. She led me into the armoury. A great clang of the bell in the paved court fell upon our ears.

"Make haste," she said, and darted to the door at the foot of the little stair. "Mind how you go," she went on. "The steps are very much worn. Keep your right shoulder foremost."

I obeyed her directions, and followed her up the stair. We passed the door of a room over the armoury, and ascended still, to creep out at last through a very low door on to the leads of the little square tower. Here we could on the one side look into every corner of the paved court, and on the other, across the roof of the hall, could see about half of the high court as they called it, into which the carriages drove; and from this post of vantage, we watched the arrival of a good many parties. I thought the ladies tripping across the paved court, with their gay dresses lighting up the spring twilight, and their sweet voices rippling its almost pensive silence, suited the time and the place much better than the carriages dashing into the other court, fine as they looked with their well-kept horses and their servants in gay liveries. The sun was down, and the moon was rising—near the full, but there was too much light in the sky to let her make much of herself yet. It was one of those spring evenings which you could not tell from an autumn one except for a certain something in the air appealing to an undefined sense—rather that of smell than any other. There were green buds and not withering leaves in it—life and not death; and the voices of the gathering guests were of the season, and pleasant to the soul. Of course Nature did not then affect me so definitely as to make me give forms of thought to her influences. It is now first that I turn them into shapes and words.

As we stood, I discovered that I had been a little mistaken about the position of the Hall. I saw that, although from some points in front it seemed to stand on an isolated rock, the ground rose behind it, terrace upon terrace, the uppermost of which terraces was crowned with rows of trees. Over them, the moon was now gathering her strength.

"It is rather cold; I think we had better go in," said Clara, after we had remained there for some minutes without seeing any fresh arrivals.

"Very well," I answered. "What shall we do? Shall you go home?"

"No, certainly not. We must see a good deal more of the fun first."

"How will you manage that? You will go to the ball-room, I suppose. You can go where you please, of course."

"Oh no! I'm not grand enough to be invited. Oh, dear no! At least I am not *old* enough."

"But you will be some day."

"I don't know. Perhaps. We'll see. Meantime we must make the best of it. What are *you* going to do?"

"I shall go back to the library."

"Then I'll go with you—till the music begins; and then I'll take you where you can see a little of the dancing. It's great fun."

"But how will you manage that?"

"You leave that to me."

We descended at once to the armoury, where I had left my candle; and thence we returned to the library.

"Would you like me to read to you?" I asked.

"I don't mind—if it's anything worth hearing."

"Well, I'll read you a bit of the book I was reading when you came in."

"What! that musty old book! No, thank you. It's enough to give one the horrors.—The very sight of it is enough. How can you like such frumpy old things?"

"Oh! you mustn't mind the look of it," I said. "It's *very* nice inside!"

"I know where there *is* a nice one," she returned. "Give me the candle."

I followed her to another of the rooms, where she searched for some time. At length—"There it is!" she said, and put into my hand *The Castle of Otranto*. The name promised well. She next led the way to a lovely little bay window, forming almost a closet, which looked out upon the park, whence, without seeing the moon, we could see her light on the landscape, and the great deep shadows cast over the park from the towers of the Hall. There we sat on the broad window sill, and I began to read. It was delightful.—Does it indicate loss of power, that the grown man cannot enjoy the book in which the boy delighted? Or is it that the realities of the book, as perceived by his keener eyes, refuse to blend with what imagination would supply if it might?

No sooner however did the first notes of the distant violins enter the ear of my companion, than she started to her feet.

"What's the matter?" I asked, looking up from the book.

"Don't you hear the music?" she said, half indignantly.

"I hear it now," I answered; "but why——?"

"Come along," she interrupted eagerly. "We shall just be in time to see them go across from the drawing-room to the ball-room. Come, come. Leave your candle."

I put down my book with some reluctance. She led me into the armoury, and from the armoury out on the gallery half-encompassing the great hall, which was lighted up, and full of servants. Opening another door in the gallery, she conducted me down a stair which led almost into the hall, but, ascending again behind it, landed us in a little lobby, on one side of which was the drawing-room, and on the other the ball-room, on another level, reached by a few high semi-circular steps.

"Quick! quick!" said Clara, and turning sharply round, she opened another door, disclosing a square-built stone staircase. She pushed the door carefully against the wall, ran up a few steps, I following in some trepidation, turned abruptly and sat down. I did as she did, questioning nothing: I had committed myself to her superior knowledge.

The quick ear of my companion had caught the first sounds of the tuning of the instruments, and here we were, before the invitation to dance, a customary observance at Moldwarp Hall, had begun to play. In a few minutes thereafter, the door of the drawing-room opened; when, pair after pair, the company, to the number of over a hundred and fifty, I should guess, walked past the foot of the stair on which we were seated, and ascended the steps into the ball-room. The lobby was dimly lighted, except from the two open doors, and there was little danger of our being seen.

I interrupt my narrative to mention the odd fact, that so fully was my mind possessed with the antiquity of the place, which it had been the pride of generation after generation to keep up, that now when I recall the scene, the guests always appear dressed not as they were then, but in a far more antique style with which after knowledge supplied my inner vision.

Last of all came Lady Brotherton, Sir Giles's wife, a pale, delicate-looking woman, leaning on the arm of a tall, long-necked, would-be-stately, yet insignificant-looking man. She gave a shiver as, up the steps from the warm drawing-room, she came at once opposite our open door.

"What a draught there is here!" she said, adjusting her rose-coloured scarf about her shoulders. "It feels quite wintry. Will you oblige me, Mr. Mollet, by shutting that door? Sir Giles will not allow me to have it built up. I am sure there are plenty of ways to the leads besides that."

"This door, my lady?" asked Mr. Mollet.

I trembled lest he should see us.

"Yes. Just throw it to. There's a spring lock on it. I can't think——"

The slam and echoing bang of the closing door cut off the end of the sentence. Even Clara was a little frightened, for her hand stole into mine for a moment before she burst out laughing.

"Hush! hush!" I said. "They will hear you."

"I almost wish they would," she said. "What a goose I was to be frightened, and not speak! Do you know where we are?"

"No," I answered; "how should I? Where are we?"

My fancy of knowing the place had vanished utterly by this time. All my mental charts of it had got thoroughly confused, and I do not believe I could have even found my way back to the library.

"Shut out on the leads," she answered. "Come along. We may as well go to meet our fate."

I confess to a little palpitation of the heart as she spoke, for I was not yet old enough to feel that Clara's companionship made the doom a light one. Up the stair we went—here no twisting corkscrew, but a broad flight enough, with square turnings. At the top was a door, fastened only with a bolt inside—against no worse housebreakers than the winds and rains. When we emerged, we found ourselves in the open night.

"Here we are in the moon's drawing-room!" said Clara.

The scene was lovely. The sky was all now—the earth only a background or pedestal for the heavens. The river, far below, shone here and there in answer to the moon, while the meadows and fields lay as in the oblivion of sleep, and the wooded hills were only dark formless masses. But the sky was the dwelling-place of the moon, before whose radiance, penetratingly still, the stars shrunk as if they would hide in the flowing skirts of her garments. There was scarce a cloud to be seen, and the whiteness of the moon made the blue thin. I could hardly believe in what I saw. It was as if I had come awake without getting out of the dream.

We were on the roof of the ball-room. We felt the rhythmic motion of the dancing feet shake the building in time to the music. "A low melodious thunder" buried beneath—above the eternal silence of the white moon!

We passed to the roof of the drawing-room. From it, upon one side, we could peep into the great gothic window of the hall which rose high above it. We could see the servants passing and repassing, with dishes for the supper which was being laid in the dining-room under the drawing-room, for the hall was never used for entertainment now, except on such great occasions as a coming of age, or an election-feast, when all classes met.

"We mustn't stop here," said Clara. "We shall get our deaths of cold."

"What shall we do then?" I asked.

"There are plenty of doors," she answered—"only Mrs. Wilson has a foolish fancy for keeping them all bolted. We must try, though."

Over roof after roof we went; now descending, now ascending a few steps; now walking along narrow gutters, between battlement and sloping roof; now crossing awkward junctions—trying doors many in tower and turret—all in vain! Every one was bolted on the inside. We had grown quite silent, for the case looked serious.

"This is the last door," said Clara—"the last we can reach. There are more in the towers, but they are higher up. What *shall* we do? Except we go down a chimney, I don't know what's to be done."

Still her voice did not falter, and my courage did not give way. She stood for a few moments, silent. I stood regarding her, as one might listen for a doubtful oracle.

"Yes. I've got it!" she said at length. "Have you a good head, Wilfrid?"

"I don't quite know what you mean," I answered.

"Do you mind being on a narrow place, without much to hold by?"

"High up?" I asked with a shiver.

"Yes."

For a moment I did not answer. It was a special weakness of my physical nature, one which my imagination had increased tenfold—the absolute horror I had of such a transit as she was evidently about to propose. My worst dreams—from which I would wake with my heart going like a fire-engine, were of adventures of the kind. But before a woman, how could I draw back? I would rather lie broken at the bottom of the wall. And if the fear should come to the worst, I could at least throw myself down and end it so.

"Well?" I said, as if I had only been waiting for her exposition of the case.

"Well!" she returned.—"Come along then."

I did go along—like a man to the gallows; only I would not have turned back to save my life. But I should have hailed the slightest change of purpose in her, with such pleasure as Daniel must have felt when he found the lions would rather not eat him. She retraced our steps a long way—until we reached the middle of the line of building which divided the two courts.

"There!" she said, pointing to the top of the square tower over the entrance to the hall, from which we had watched the arrival of the guests: it rose about nine feet only above where we now stood in the gutter—"I *know* I left the door open when we came down. I did it on purpose. I hate Goody Wilson. Lucky, you see!—that is if you have a head. And if you haven't, it's all the same: I have."

So saying, she pointed to a sort of flying buttress which sprung sideways, with a wide span, across the angle the tower made with the hall, from an embrasure of the battlement of the hall to the outer corner of the tower, itself more solidly buttressed. I think it

must have been made to resist the outward pressure of the roof of the hall; but it was one of those puzzling points which often occur—and oftenest in domestic architecture—where additions and consequent alterations have been made from time to time. Such will occasion sometimes as much conjecture towards their explanation, as a disputed passage in Shakspeare or Æschylus.

Could she mean me to cross that hair-like bridge? The mere thought was a terror. But I would not blench. Fear I confess—cowardice if you will:—poltroonery, not.

"I see," I answered. "I will try. If I fall, don't blame me. I will do my best."

"You don't think," she returned, "I'm going to let you go alone! I should have to wait hours before you found a door to let me down—except indeed you went and told Goody Wilson, and I had rather die where I am. No, no. Come along. I'll show you how."

With a rush and a scramble, she was up over the round back of the buttress before I had time to understand that she meant as usual to take the lead. If she could but have sent me back a portion of her skill, or lightness, or nerve, or whatever it was, just to set me off with a rush like that! But I stood preparing at once and hesitating. She turned and looked over the battlements of the tower.

"Never mind, Wilfrid," she said; "I'll fetch you presently."

"No, no;" I cried. "Wait for me. I'm coming."

I got astride of the buttress, and painfully forced my way up. It was like a dream of leap-frog, prolonged under painfully recurring difficulties. I shut my eyes, and persuaded myself that all I had to do was to go on leap-frogging. At length, after more trepidation and brain-turning than I care to dwell upon, lest even now it should bring back a too keen realization of itself, I reached the battlement, seizing which with one shaking hand, and finding the other grasped by Clara, I tumbled on the leads of the tower.

"Come along!" she said. "You see, when the girls like, they can beat the boys—even at their own games. We're all right now."

"I did my best," I returned, mightily relieved. "I'm not an angel, you know. I can't fly like you."

She seemed to appreciate the compliment.

"Never mind. I've done it before. It was game of you to follow."

Her praise elated me. And it was well.

"Come along," she added.

She seemed to be always saying *Come along*.

I obeyed, full of gratitude and relief. She skipped to the tiny turret which rose above our heads, and lifted the door-latch. But, instead of disappearing within, she turned and looked at me in white dismay. The door was bolted. Her look roused what there was of manhood in me. I felt that, as it had now come to the last gasp, it was mine to comfort her.

"We are no worse than we were," I said. "Never mind."

"I don't know that," she answered mysteriously.—"Can you go back as you came? I can't."

I looked over the edge of the battlement where I stood. There was the buttress crossing the angle of moonlight, with its shadow lying far down on the wall. I shuddered at the thought of renewing my unspeakable dismay. But what must be must. Besides, Clara had praised me for creeping where she could fly: now I might show her that I could creep where she could not fly.

"I will try," I returned, putting one leg through an embrasure, and holding on by the adjoining battlement.

"Do take care, Wilfrid," she cried, stretching out her hands, as if to keep me from falling.

A sudden pulse of life rushed through me. All at once I became not only bold, but ambitious.

"Give me a kiss," I said, "before I go."

"Do you make so much of it?" she returned, stepping back a pace.—How much a woman she was even then!

Her words roused something in me which to this day I have not been able quite to understand. A sense of wrong had its share in the feeling; but what else I can hardly venture to say. At all events, an inroad of careless courage was the consequence. I stepped at once upon the buttress, and stood for a moment looking at her—no doubt with reproach. She sprang towards me.

"I beg your pardon," she said.

The end of the buttress was a foot or two below the level of the leads, where Clara stood. She bent over the battlement, stooped her face towards me, and kissed me on the mouth. My only answer was to turn and walk down the buttress, erect; a walk which, as the arch of the buttress became steeper, ended in a run and a leap on to the gutter of the hall. There I turned, and saw her stand like a lady in a ballad leaning after me in the moonlight. I lifted my cap and sped away, not knowing whither, but fancying that out of her sight I could make up my mind better. Nor was I mistaken. The moment I sat down, my brains began to go about, and in another moment I saw what might be attempted.

In going from roof to roof, I had seen the little gallery along which I had passed with Mrs. Wilson on my way to the library. It crossed what might be called an open shaft in the building. I thought I could manage, roofed as it was, to get in by the open side. It was some time before I could find it again; but when I did come upon it at last, I saw that it might be done. By the help of a projecting gargoyle, curiously carved in the days when the wall to which it clung had formed part of the front of the building, I got my feet upon the wooden rail of the gallery, caught hold of one of the small pillars which supported the roof, and slewed myself in. I was almost as glad

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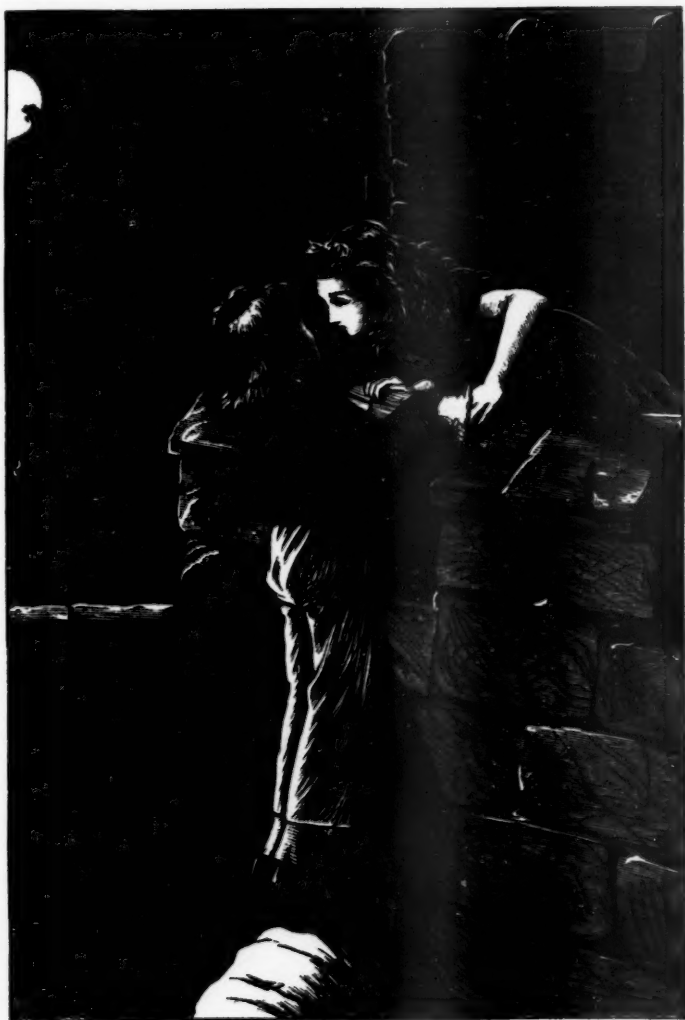
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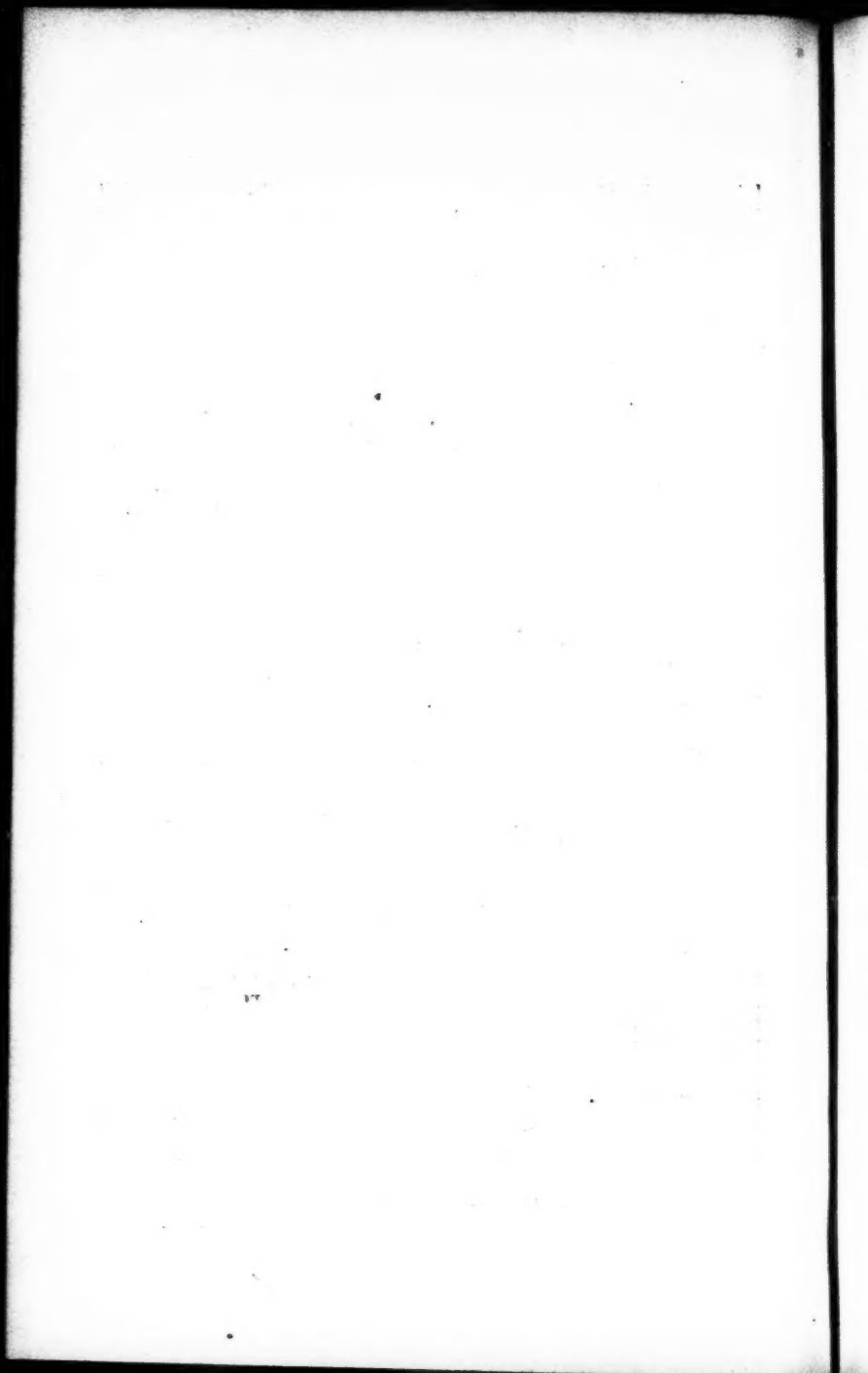
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"WILFRID CUMBERMEDE."



as when I had crossed the buttress, for below me was a paved bottom, between high walls, without any door, like a dry well in the midst of the building.

My recollection of the way to the armoury, I found, however, almost obliterated. I knew that I must pass through a bed-room at the end of the gallery, and that was all I remembered. I opened the door, and found myself face to face with a young girl with wide eyes. She stood staring and astonished, but not frightened. She was younger than Clara, and not so pretty. Her eyes were dark, and so was the hair she had been brushing. Her face would have been quite pale, but for the rosy tinge of surprise. She made no exclamation, only stared with her brush in her hand, and questions in her eyes. I felt far enough from comfortable; but with a great effort I spoke.

"I beg your pardon. I had to get off the roof, and this was the only way. Pease do not tell Mrs. Wilson."

"No," she said at once, very quietly; "but you must go away."

"If I could only find the library!" I said. "I am so afraid of going into more rooms where I have no business."

"I will show you the way," she returned with a smile; and laying down her brush, took up a candle and led me from the room.

In a few moments I was safe. My conductor vanished at once. The glimmer of my own candle in a further room, guided me, and I was soon at the top of the corkscrew staircase. I found the door very slightly fastened: Clara must herself have unwittingly moved the bolt when she shut it. I found her standing all eagerness, waiting me. We hurried back to the library, and there I told her how I had effected an entrance, and met with a guide.

"It must have been little Polly Osborne," she said. "Her mother is going to stay all night, I suppose. She's a good-natured little goose, and won't tell.—Now come along. We'll have a peep from the picture-gallery into the ball-room. That door is sure to be open."

"If you don't mind, Clara, I would rather stay where I am. I oughtn't to be wandering over the house when Mrs. Wilson thinks I am here."

"Oh, you little coward!" said Clara.

I thought I hardly deserved the word, and it did not make me more inclined to accompany her.

"You can go alone," I said. "You did not expect to find me when you came."

"Of course I can. Of course not. It's quite as well, too. You won't get me into any more scrapes."

"Did I get you into the scrape, Clara?"

"Yes, you did," she answered laughing, and walked away.]

I felt a good deal hurt, but comforted myself by saying she could not mean it, and sat down again to the *Seven Champions*.

CHAPTER XIV. :

THE GHOST.

I SAW no more of Clara, but sat and read until I grew cold and tired, and wished very much that Mrs. Wilson would come. I thought she might have forgot me in the hurry, and there I should have to stay all night. After my recent escape, however, from a danger so much worse, I could regard the prospect with some composure. A full hour more must have passed; I was getting sleepy, and my candle had burned low, when at length Mrs. Wilson did make her appearance, and I accompanied her gladly.

"I am sure you want your tea, poor boy!" she said.

"Tea! Mrs. Wilson," I rejoined. "It's bed I want. But when I think of it, I *am* rather hungry."

"You shall have tea and bed both," she answered kindly. "I'm sorry you've had such a dull evening, but I could *not* help it."

"Indeed, I've not been dull at all," I answered—"till just the last hour or so."

I longed to tell her all I had been about, for I felt guilty; but I would not betray Clara.

"Well, here we are!" she said, opening the door of her own room. "I hope I shall have peace enough to see you make a good meal."

I did make a good meal. When I had done, Mrs. Wilson took a rush-light, and led the way. I took my sword and followed her. Into what quarter of the house she conducted me, I could not tell. There was a nice fire burning in the room, and my night-apparel was airing before it. She set the light on the floor, and left me with a kind good-night. I was soon undressed and in bed, with my sword beside me on the coverlid of silk patchwork.

But, from whatever cause, sleepy as I had been a little while before, I lay wide awake now, staring about the room. Like many others in the house, it was hung with tapestry, which was a good deal worn and patched—notably in one place, where limbs of warriors and horses came to an untimely end on all sides of a certain square piece quite different from the rest in colour and design. I know now that it was a piece of *Gobelins*, in the midst of ancient needlework. It looked the brighter of the two, but its colours were about three, with a good deal of white; whereas that which surrounded it had had many and brilliant colours, which, faded and dull and sombre, yet kept their harmony. The guard of the rush-light cast deeper and queerer shadows, as the fire sank lower. Its holes gave eyes of light to some of the figures in the tapestry, and as the light wavered, the eyes wandered about in a ghostly manner, and the shadows changed and flickered and heaved uncomfortably.

How long I had lain thus I do not know; but at last I found myself watching the rectangular patch of newer tapestry. Could it be that it moved? It *could* be only the effect of the wavering shadows. And yet I could not convince myself that it did not move. It *did* move. It came forward. One side of it did certainly come forward. A kind of universal cramp seized me—a contraction of every fibre of my body. The patch opened like a door—wider and wider; and from behind came a great helmet, peeping. I was all one terror, but my nerves held out so far that I lay like a watching dog—watching for what horror would come next. The door opened wider. A mailed hand and arm appeared, and at length a figure, armed cap-a-pie, stepped slowly down, stood for a moment peering about, and then began to walk through the room, as if searching for something. It came nearer and nearer to the bed. I wonder now, when I think of it, that the cold horror did not reach my heart. I cannot have been so much of a coward, surely, after all! But I suspect it was only that general paralysis prevented the extreme of terror, just as a man in the clutch of a wild beast is hardly aware of suffering. At last the figure stooped over my bed, and stretched out a long arm. I remember nothing more.

I woke in the grey of the morning. Could a faint have passed into a sleep? or was it all a dream? I lay for some time before I could recall what made me so miserable. At length my memory awoke, and I gazed fearful about the room. The white ashes of the burnt-out fire were lying in the grate; the stand of the rush-light was on the floor; the wall with its tapestry was just as it had been; the cold gray light had annihilated the fancied visions: I had been dreaming, and was now awake. But I could not lie longer in bed. I must go out. The morning air would give me life: I felt worn and weak. Vision or dream, the room was hateful to me. With a great effort I sat up, for I still feared to move, lest I should catch a glimpse of the armed figure. Terrible as it had been in the night, it would be more terrible now. I peered into every corner. Each was vacant. Then first I remembered that I had been reading the *Castle of Otranto* and the *Seven Champions of Christendom*, the night before. I jumped out of bed and dressed myself, growing braver and braver as the light of the lovely spring morning swelled in the room. Having dipped my head in cold water, I was myself again. I opened the lattice and looked out. The first breath of air was a denial to the whole thing. I laughed at myself. Earth and sky were alive with spring. The wind was the breath of the coming summer: there were flakes of sunshine and shadow in it. Before me lay a green bank with a few trees on its top. It was crowded with primroses growing through the grass. The dew was lying all about, shining and sparkling in the first rays of the level sun, which itself I could not see. The tide of life rose in my heart and rushed through my

limbs. I would take my sword, and go for a ramble through the park. I went to my bed-side, and stretched across to find it by the wall. It must have slipped down at the back of the bed. No. Where could it be? In a word, I searched everywhere, but my loved weapon had vanished. The visions of the night returned, and for a moment I believed them all. The night once again closed around me, darkened yet more with the despair of an irreparable loss. I rushed from the room and through a long passage, with the blind desire to get out. The stare of an unwashed maid, already busy with her pail and brush, brought me to my senses.

"I beg your pardon," I said; "I want to get out."

She left her implements, led me down a stair close at hand, opened the door at its foot, and let me out into the high court. I gazed about me. It was as if I had escaped from a prison-cell into the chamber of torture: I stood the centre of a multitude of windows—the eyes of the house all fixed upon me. On one side was the great gate, through which, from the roof, I had seen the carriages drive the night before; but it was closed. I remembered, however, that Sir Giles had brought me in by a wicket in that gate. I hastened to it. There was but a bolt to withdraw, and I was free.

But all was gloomy within, and genial nature could no longer enter. Glittering jewels of sunlight and dew were nothing but drops of water upon blades of grass. Fresh-bursting trees were no more than the deadest of winter-bitten branches. The great eastern window of the universe, gorgeous with gold and roses, was but the weary sun making a fuss about nothing. My sole relief lay in motion. I roamed I knew not whither, nor how long.

At length I found myself on a height eastward of the Hall, overlooking its gardens, which lay in deep terraces beneath. Inside a low wall was the first of them, dark with an avenue of ancient trees, and below was the large oriel window in the end of the ball-room. I climbed over the wall, which was built of cunningly fitted stones, with mortar only in the top row; and drawn by the gloom, strolled up and down the avenue for a long time. At length I became aware of a voice I had heard before. I could see no one; but, hearkening about, I found it must come from the next terrace. Descending by a deep flight of old mossy steps, I came upon a strip of smooth sward, with yew-trees, dark and trim, on each side of it. At the end of the walk was an arbour, in which I could see the glimmer of something white. Too miserable to be shy, I advanced and peeped in. The girl who had shown me the way to the library was talking to her mother.

"Mamma!" she said, without showing any surprise, "here is the boy who came into our room last night."

"How do you do?" said the lady kindly, making room for me on the bench beside her.

I answered as politely as I could, and felt a strange comfort glide from the sweetness of her countenance.

"What an adventure you had last night!" she said. "It was well you did not fall."

"That wouldn't have been much worse than having to stop where we were," I answered.

The conversation thus commenced went on until I had told them all my history, including my last adventure.

"You must have dreamed it," said the lady.

"So I thought, ma'am," I answered, "until I found that my sword was gone."

"Are you sure you looked everywhere?" she asked.

"Indeed, I did."

"It does not follow however that the ghost took it. It is more likely Mrs. Wilson came in to see you after you were asleep, and carried it off."

"Oh, yes!" I cried, rejoiced at the suggestion; "that must be it. I shall ask her."

"I am sure you will find it so. Are you going home soon?"

"Yes—as soon as I've had my breakfast. It's a good walk from here to Aldwick."

"So it is.—We are going that way too," she added thinkingly.

"Mr. Elder is a great friend of papa's—isn't he, mamma?" said the girl.

"Yes, my dear. They were friends at college."

"I have heard Mr. Elder speak of Mr. Osborne," I said. "Do you live near us?"

"Not very far off—in the next parish, where my husband is rector," she answered. "If you could wait till the afternoon, we should be happy to take you there. The pony-carriage is coming for us."

"Thank you, ma'am," I answered; "but I ought to go immediately after breakfast. You won't mention about the roof, will you? I oughtn't to get Clara into trouble."

"She is a wild girl," said Mrs. Osborne; "but I think you are quite right."

"How lucky it was I knew the library!" said Mary, who had become quite friendly, from under her mother's wing.

"That it was! But I daresay you know all about the place," I answered.

"No, indeed!" she returned. "I know nothing about it. As we went to our room, mamma opened the door and showed me the library, else I shouldn't have been able to help you at all."

"Then you haven't been here often?"

"No; and I never shall be again.—I'm going away to school," she added; and her voice trembled.

"So am I," I said. "I'm going to Switzerland in a month or two. But then I haven't a mamma to leave behind me."

She broke down at that, and hid her head on her mother's bosom. I had unawares added to her grief, for her brother Charley was going to Switzerland too.

I found afterwards that Mr. Elder, having been consulted by Mr. Osborne, had arranged with my uncle that Charley Osborne and I should go together.

Mary Osborne—I never called her Polly as Clara did—continued so overcome by her grief, that her mother turned to me and said,

"I think you had better go, Master Cumbermede."

I bade her good morning, and made my way to Mrs. Wilson's apartment. I found she had been to my room, and was expecting me with some anxiety, fearing I had set off without my breakfast. Alas! she knew nothing about the sword, looked annoyed, and, I thought, rather mysterious; said she would have a search, make inquiries, do what she could, and such like, but begged I would say nothing about it in the house. I left her with a suspicion that she believed the ghost had carried it away, and that it was of no use to go searching for it.

Two days after, a parcel arrived for me. I concluded it was my sword; but to my grievous disappointment, found it was only a large hamper of apples and cakes, very acceptable in themselves, but too plainly indicating Mrs. Wilson's desire to console me for what could not be helped. Mr. Elder never missed the sword. I rose high in the estimation of my schoolfellows because of the adventure, especially in that of Moberly, who did not believe in the ghost, but ineffectually tasked his poor brains to account for the disappearance of the weapon. The best light was thrown upon it by a merry boy of the name of Fisher, who declared his conviction that the steward had carried it off to add to his collection.

CHAPTER XV.

AWAY.

I WILL not linger longer over this part of my history—already, I fear, much too extended for the patience of my readers. My excuse is, that in looking back, the events I have recorded appear large and prominent, and that certainly they have a close relation with my after history.

The time arrived when I had to leave England for Switzerland. I will say nothing of my leave-taking. It was not a bitter one. Hope was strong, and rooted in present pleasure. I was capable of much happiness—keenly responsive to the smallest agreeable impulse from without or from within. I had good health, and life

was happiness in itself. The blowing of the wind, the shining of the sun, or the glitter of water, was sufficient to make me glad; and I had self-consciousness enough to increase the delight by the knowledge that I was glad.

The fact is I was coming in for my share in the spiritual influences of Nature, so largely poured on the heart and mind of my generation. The prophets of the new blessing, Wordsworth and Coleridge, I knew nothing of. Keats was only beginning to write. I had read a little of Cowper, but did not care for him. Yet I was under the same spell as they all. Nature was a power upon me. I was filled with the vague recognition of a present soul in Nature—with a sense of the humanity everywhere diffused through her and operating upon ours. I was but fourteen, and had only feelings, but something lay at the heart of the feelings, which would one day blossom into thoughts.

At the coach-office in the county-town, I first met my future companion, with his father, who was to see us to our destination. My uncle accompanied me no farther, and I soon found myself on the top of the coach, with only one thing to do—make the acquaintance of Charles Osborne. His father was on the box-seat, and we two sat behind; but we were both shy, and for some time neither spoke. Charles was about my own age, rather like his sister, only that his eyes were blue, and his hair a lightish brown. A tremulousness about the mouth betrayed a nervous temperament. His skin was very fair and thin, showing the blue veins. As he did not speak, I sat for a little while watching him, without however the least speculation concerning him, or any effort to discover his character. I have not even yet reached the point of trying to find people out. I take what time and acquaintance discloses, but never attempt to forestall, which may come partly from trust, partly from want of curiosity, partly from a disinclination to unnecessary mental effort. But as I watched his face, half-unconsciously, I could not help observing that now and then it would light up suddenly and darken again almost instantly. At last his father turned round, and with some severity said:

"You do not seem to be making any approaches to mutual acquaintance. Charles, why don't you address your companion?"

The words were uttered in the slow tone of one used to matters too serious for common speech.

The boy cast a hurried glance at me, smiled uncertainly, and moved uneasily on his seat. His father turned away and made a remark to the coachman.

Mr. Osborne was a very tall, thin, yet square-shouldered man, with a pale face, and large features of delicate form. He looked severe, pure, and irritable. The tone of his voice, although the words were measured and rather stilted, led me to this last conclusion quite as

much as the expression of his face ; for it was thin and a little acrid. I soon observed that Charley started slightly, as often as his father addressed him ; but this might be because his father always did so with more or less of abruptness. At times there was great kindness in his manner, seeming, however, less the outcome of natural tenderness than a sense duty. His being was evidently a weight upon his son's, and kept down the natural movements of his spirit. A number of small circumstances only led me to these conclusions ; for nothing remarkable occurred to set in any strong light their mutual relation. For his side Charles was always attentive and ready, although with a promptitude that had more in it of the mechanical impulse of habit than of pleased obedience. Mr. Osborne spoke kindly to me—I think the more kindly that I was not his son, and he was therefore not so responsible for me. But he looked as if the care of the whole world lay on his shoulders ; as if an awful destruction were the most likely thing to happen to every one, and to him were committed the toilsome chance of saving some. Doubtless he would not have trusted his boy so far from home, but that the clergyman to whom he was about to hand him over, was an old friend, of the same religious opinions as himself.

I could well, but must not, linger over the details of our journey, full to me of most varied pleasure. The constant change, not so rapid as to prevent the mind from reposing a little upon the scenes which presented themselves ; the passing vision of countries and peoples, manners and modes of life, so different from our own, did much to arouse and develope my nature. Those flashes of pleasure came upon Charles's pale face more and more frequently ; and ere the close of the first day we had begun to talk with some degree of friendliness. But it became clear to me that with his father ever blocking up our horizon, whether he sat with his broad back in front of us on the coach-box, or paced the deck of a vessel, or perched with us under the hood on the top of a diligence, we should never arrive at any freedom of speech. I sometimes wondered, long after, whether Mr. Osborne had begun to discover that he was over-laying and smothering the young life of his boy, and had therefore adopted the plan, so little to have been expected from him, of sending his son to foreign parts to continue his education.

I have no distinct recollection of dates, or even of the exact season of the year. I believe it was the early summer, but in my memory the whole journey is now a mass of confused loveliness and pleasure. Not that we had the best of weather all the way. I well recollect pouring rains, and from the fact that I distinctly remember my first view of an Alpine height, I am certain we must have had days of mist and rain immediately before. That sight however, to me more like an individual revelation or vision than the impact of an object upon the brain, stands in my mind altogether isolated from preceding and

following impressions—alone, a thing to praise God for, if there be a God to praise. If there be not, then was the whole thing a grand and lovely illusion, worthy, for grandeur and loveliness, of a world with a God at the heart of it. But the grandeur and the loveliness spring from the operation of natural laws; the laws themselves are real and true—how could the false result from them? I hope yet and will hope that I am not a bubble filled with the mocking breath of a Mephistopheles, but a child whom his infinite Father will not hardly judge that he could not believe in him so much as he would. I will tell how the vision came.

Although comparatively few people visited Switzerland in those days, Mr. Osborne had been there before, and for some reason or other had determined on going round by Interlachen. At Thun we found a sail-boat, which we hired to take us and our luggage. At starting, an incident happened which would not be worth mentioning, but for the impression it made upon me: a French lady accompanied by a young girl approached Mr. Osborne—doubtless perceiving he was a clergyman, for, being an *Evangelical* of the most pure, honest and narrow type, he was in every point and line of his countenance marked a priest and apart from his fellowmen—and asked him to allow her and her daughter to go in the boat with us to Interlachen. A glow of pleasure awoke in me at sight of his courtly behaviour, with lifted hat and bowed head; for I had never been in the company of such a gentleman before. But the wish instantly followed that his son might have shared in his courtesy. We partook freely of his justice and benevolence, but he showed us no such grace as he showed the lady. I have since observed that sons are endlessly grateful for courtesy from their fathers.

The lady and her daughter sat down in the stern of the boat; and therefore Charlie and I, not certainly to our discomfiture, had to go before the mast. The men rowed out into the lake, and then hoisted the sail. Away we went careering before a pleasant breeze. As yet it blew fog and mist, but the hope was that it would soon blow it away.

An unspoken friendship by this time bound Charley and me together, silent in its beginnings and slow in its growth—not the worst pledges of endurance. And now for the first time in our journey, Charley was hidden from his father: the sail came between them. He glanced at me with a slight sigh, which even then I took for an involuntary sigh of relief. We lay leaning over the bows, now looking up at the mist blown in never-ending volumed sheets, now at the sail swelling in the wind before which it fled, and again down at the water through which our boat was ploughing its evanescent furrow. We could see very little. Portions of the shore would now and then appear, dim like reflections from a tarnished mirror, and then fade back into the depths of cloudy dissolution. Still it was

growing lighter, and the man who was on the outlook became less anxious in his forward gaze, and less frequent in his calls to the helmsman. I was lying half over the gunwale, looking into the strange-coloured water, blue dimmed with undissolved white, when a cry from Charles made me start and look up. It was indeed a God-like vision. The mist yet rolled thick below, but away up, far away and far up, yet as if close at hand, the clouds were broken into a mighty window, through which looked in upon us a huge mountain peak, swathed in snow. One great level band of darker cloud crossed its breast, above which rose the peak, triumphant in calmness, and stood unutterably solemn and grand, in clouds as white as its own whiteness. It had been there all the time! I sunk on my knees in the boat and gazed up. With a sudden sweep the clouds curtained the mighty window, and the Jungfrau withdrew into its Holy of Holies. I am painfully conscious of the helplessness of my speech. The vision vanishes from the words as it vanished from the bewildered eyes. But from the mind it glorified it has never vanished. I have *been* more ever since that sight. To have beheld a truth is an apotheosis. What the truth was I could not tell; but I had seen something which raised me above my former self and made me long to rise higher yet. It awoke worship, and a belief in the incomprehensible divine; but admitted of being analysed no more than, in that transient vision, my intellect could—ere dawning it vanished—analyse it into the deserts of rock, the gulfs of green ice and flowing water, the savage solitudes of snow, the mysterious miles of draperied mist, that went to make up the vision, each and all essential thereto.

I had been too much given to the attempted production in myself of effects to justify the vague theories towards which my inborn prepossessions carried me. I had felt enough to believe there was more to be felt; and such stray scraps of verse of the new order as, floating about, had reached me, had set me questioning and testing my own life and perceptions and sympathies by what these awoke in me at second-hand. I had often doubted, oppressed by the power of these, whether I could myself see, or whether my sympathy with Nature was not merely inspired by the vision of others. Ever after this, if such a doubt returned, with it arose the Jungfrau, looking into my very soul.

"Oh Charlie!" was all I could say. Our hands met blindly, and clasped each other. I burst into silent tears.

When I looked up, Charley was staring into the mist again. His eyes too were full of tears, but some troubling contradiction prevented their flowing: I saw it by the expression of that mobile but now firmly-closed mouth.

Often ere we left Switzerland I saw similar glories: this vision remains alone, for it was the first.

I will not linger over the tempting delight of the village near which we landed, its houses covered with quaintly notched wooden scales like those of a fish, and its river full to the brim of white-blue water, rushing from the far-off bosom of the glaciers. I had never had such a sense of exuberance and plenty as this river gave me—especially where it filled the planks and piles of wood that hemmed it in like a trough. I might agonize in words for a day and I should not express the delight. And, lest my readers should apprehend a diary of a tour, I shall say nothing more of our journey, remarking only that if Switzerland were to become as common to the mere tourist mind as Cheapside is to a Londoner, the meanest of its glories would be no whit impaired thereby. Sometimes, I confess, in these days of overcrowded cities, when, in periodical floods, the lonely places of the earth are from them inundated, I do look up to the heavens and say to myself that there at least, between the stars, even in thickest of nebulous constellations, there is yet plenty of pure, unadulterated room—not even a vapour to hang a colour upon; but presently I return to my better mind and say, that any man who loves his fellow, will yet find he has room enough and to spare.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE ICE-CAVE.

DURING our journey, Mr. Osborne had seldom talked to us, and far more seldom in speech sympathetic. If by chance I came out with anything I thought or felt, even if he did not disapprove altogether, he would yet first lay hold of something to which he could object, coming round only by degrees, and with differences, to express a little consent. Evidently with him objection was the first step in instruction. It was better in his eyes to say you were wrong than to say you were right, even if you should be much more right than wrong. He had not the smallest idea of siding with the truth in you, of digging about it and watering it, until it grew a great tree in which all your thought-birds might nestle and sing their songs; but he must be ever against the error—forgetting that the only antagonist of the false is the true. “What,” I used to think in after years, “is the use of battering the walls to get at the error, when the kindly truth is holding the postern open for you to enter, and pitch it out of window?”

The evening before we parted, he gave us a solemn admonishment on the danger of being led astray by what men called the beauties of Nature—for the heart was so desperately wicked, that even of the things God had made to show his power, it would make snares for our destruction. I will not go on with his homily, out of respect for the man; for there was much earnestness in him, and

it would utterly shame me if I were supposed to hold that up to the contempt which the forms it took must bring upon it. Besides, he made such a free use of the most sacred of names, that I shrink from representing his utterance. A good man I do not doubt he was; but he did the hard parts of his duty to the neglect of the genial parts, and therefore was not a man to help others to be good. His own son revived the moment he took his leave of us—began to open up as the little red flower called the Shepherd's Hour-Glass opens when the cloud withdraws. It is a terrible thing when the father is the cloud and not the sun of his child's life. If Charley had been like the greater number of boys I have known, all this would only have hardened his mental and moral skin by the natural process of accommodation. But his skin would not harden, and the evil wrought the deeper. From his father he had inherited a conscience of abnormal sensibility; but he could not inherit the religious dogmas by means of which his father had partly deadened, partly distorted his; and constant pressure and irritation had already generated a great soreness of surface.

When he began to open up, it was after a sad fashion at first. To resume my simile of the pimpernel—it was to disclose a heart in which the glowing purple was blanched to a sickly violet. What happiness he had, came in fits and bursts, and passed as quickly, leaving him depressed and miserable. He was always either wishing to be happy, or trying to be sure of the grounds of the brief happiness he had. He allowed the natural blessedness of his years hardly a chance: the moment its lobes appeared above ground, he was handling them, examining them, and trying to pull them open. No wonder they crept underground again! It may seem hardly credible that such should be the case with a boy of fifteen, but I am not mistaken in my diagnosis. I will go a little further. Gifted with the keenest perceptions, and a nature unusually responsive to the feelings of others, he was born to be an artist. But he was content neither with his own suggestions, nor with understanding those of another; he must, by the force of his own will, generate his friend's feeling in himself, not perceiving the thing impossible. This was one point at which we touched, and which went far to enable me to understand him. The original in him was thus constantly repressed, and he suffered from the natural consequences of repression. He suffered also on the physical side from a tendency to disease of the lungs inherited from his mother.

Mr. Forest's house stood high on the Grindelwald side of the Wengern Alp, under a bare grassy height full of pasture both summer and winter. In front was a great space, half meadow, half common, rather poorly covered with hill-grasses. The rock was near the surface, and in places came through, when the grass was changed for lichens and mosses. Through this rocky meadow,

now roamed, now rushed, now tumbled one of those Alpine streams, the very thought of whose ice-born plenitude makes me happy yet. Its banks were not abrupt but rounded gently in, and grassy down to the water's brink. The larger torrents of winter wore the channel wide, and the sinking of the water in summer let the grass grow within it. But peaceful as the place was, and merry with the constant rush of this busy stream, it had, even in the hottest summer day, a memory of the winter about it, a look of suppressed desolation; for the only trees upon it were a score of straggling pines—all dead, as if blasted by lightning or smothered by snow. Perhaps they were the last of the forest in that part, and their roots had reached a stratum where they could not live. All I know is, that there they stood, blasted and dead every one of them.

Charley could never bear them, and even disliked the place because of them. His father was one whom a mote in his brother's eye repelled; the son suffered for this in twenty ways—one of which was, that a single spot in the landscape was to him enough to destroy the loveliness of exquisite surroundings.

A good way below lay the valley of the Grindelwald. The Eiger and the Matterhorn were both within sight. If a man has any sense of the infinite, he cannot fail to be rendered capable of higher things by such embodiments of the high. Otherwise, they are heaps of dirt, to be scrambled up and conquered, for scrambling and conquering's sake. They are but warts, Pelion and Ossa and all of them. They seemed to oppress Charley at first.

"Oh Willie," he said to me one day, "if I could but believe in those mountains, how happy I should be! But I doubt, I doubt they are but rocks and snow."

I only half understood him. I am afraid I never did understand him more than half. Later, I came to the conclusion that this was not the fit place for him; and that if his father had understood him, he would never have sent him there.

It was some time before Mr. Forest would take us any mountain ramble. He said we must first get accustomed to the air of the place, else the precipices would turn our brains. He allowed us however to range within certain bounds.

One day soon after our arrival, we accompanied one of our school-fellows down to the valley of the Grindelwald, specially to see the head of the snake-glacier, which having crept thither can creep no further. Somebody had even then hollowed out a cave in it. We crossed a little brook which issued from it constantly, and entered. Charley uttered a cry of dismay, but I was too much delighted at the moment to heed him. For the whole of the white cavern was filled with blue air, so blue that I saw the air which filled it. Perfectly transparent, it had no substance, only blueness, which deepened and deepened as I went further in. All down the smooth white walls

evermore was stealing a thin veil of dissolution; while here and there little runnels of the purest water were tumbling in tiny cataracts from top to bottom. It was one of the thousand birthplaces of streams, ever creeping into the day of vision from the unlike and the unknown, unrolling themselves like the fronds of a fern out of the infinite of God. Ice was all around, hard and cold and dead and white; but out of it and away went the water babbling and singing in the sunlight.

"Oh Charley!" I exclaimed, looking round in my transport for sympathy. It was now my turn to cry out, for Charley's face was that of a corpse. The brilliant blue of the cave made us look to each other most ghastly and fearful.

"Do come out, Wilfrid," he said; "I cannot bear it."

I put my arm in his, and we walked into the sunlight. He drew a deep breath of relief, and turned to me with an attempt at a smile, but his lip quivered.

"It's an awful place, Wilfrid. I don't like it. Don't go in again. I should stand waiting to see you come out in a winding sheet. I think there's something wrong with my brain. That blue seems to have got into it. I see everything horribly dead."

On the way back he started several times, and looked round as if with involuntary apprehension, but mastered himself with an effort, and joined again in the conversation. Before we reached home he was much fatigued, and complaining of headache, went to bed immediately on our arrival.

We slept in the same room. When I went up at the usual hour, he was awake.

"Can't you sleep, Charley?" I said.

"I've been asleep several times," he answered, "but I've had such a horrible dream every time! We were all corpses that couldn't get to sleep, and went about pawing the slimy walls of our marble sepulchre—so cold and wet! It was that horrible ice-cave, I suppose. But then you know that's just what it is, Wilfrid."

"I don't know what you mean," I said, instinctively turning from the subject, for the glitter of his black eyes looked bodeful. I did not then know how like he and I were, or how like my fate might have been to his, if, instead of finding at once a fit food for my fancy, and a safety-valve for its excess, in those old romances, I had had my regards turned inwards upon myself, before I could understand the phenomena there exhibited. Certainly I too should have been thus rendered miserable, and body and soul would have mutually preyed on each other.

I sought to change the subject. I could never talk to him about his father, but he had always been ready to speak of his mother and sister. Now, however, I could not rouse him. "Poor mamma!" was all the response he made to some admiring remark; and when I mentioned his sister Mary, he only said, "She's a good girl, our

Mary," and turned uneasily towards the wall. I went to bed. He lay quiet, and I fell asleep.

When I woke in the morning, I found him very unwell. I suppose the illness had been coming on for some time. He was in a low fever. As the doctor declared it not infectious, I was allowed to nurse him. He was often delirious and spoke the wildest things. Especially, he would converse with the Saviour after the strangest fashion.

He lay ill for some weeks. Mr. Forest would not allow me to sit up with him at night, but I was always by his bedside early in the morning, and did what I could to amuse and comfort him through the day. When at length he began to grow better, he was more cheerful than I had known him hitherto; but he remained very weak for some time. He had grown a good deal during his illness, and indeed never looked a boy again.

THE GAMUT OF LIGHT.

SOME months ago the writer of the present paper had occasion, during the course of a lecture on astronomy, to explain the nature of spectroscopic analysis to a mixed audience. He had gone through the usual statement of the laws on which this mode of research depends; but he felt convinced that the explanation had been insufficient. That singular sense of sympathy which enables every lecturer to tell whether his audience is following him, assured the writer that his audience, with every readiness to be convinced, had not grasped the essential principle on which spectroscopic analysis depends. It will be understood that his object was not to give a complete account of the new analysis; but it was essential for his purpose that the convincing nature of the evidence which the analysis affords should be brought clearly before his audience. He knew that before long he would have to tell them certain very startling facts, and that unless they had some solid ground for believing these facts, the whole lecture would resolve itself into a mere series of statements to be accepted on trust, whereas the end and aim of lecturing is, or should be, to demonstrate.

In this strait, it occurred to him to re-state, but in a new form, the evidence on which the application of the spectroscope depends. It is no new conception to compare light and sound together, or to illustrate the analysis of light by a reference to the combinations of musical notes. In fact, the present writer, in one of the earliest numbers of this very magazine, had employed this method of illustrating the subject. But it was a new thing—to him, at least—to test the efficiency of this method of explanation by bringing it before an audience immediately after the ordinary explanation had failed. It was, therefore, with no small interest and satisfaction that he found the audience grasping at once the points he was so anxious to enforce, and becoming eager to hear how the mode of analysis they now trusted in, had been applied by physicists to astronomical problems.

This experience, and the fact that day after day new facts are being revealed by the spectroscope, induce the writer to think that an explanation of the powers of the instrument on the plan referred to may be serviceable to many who daily hear the work of the spectroscope referred to, and have perhaps often seen its action scientifically explained, but have yet no clear and definite ideas of the nature of the evidence it supplies, or of the reasons on which men of science base their acceptance of such evidence.

Every one is familiar with the gamut of *sound*. It is also easy to conceive the orderly succession of notes separated by definite tone-intervals, replaced by an arrangement in which the difference between successive notes should be imperceptible. We can imagine, for instance, that in place of the white and black keys between two C's of a piano there might be an indefinite number of keys, so that, supposing these swept from C to C, every possible gradation of sound between those notes, would become audible. We shall call this arrangement a *continuous gamut*.

Now it is found that when the light of an incandescent solid or fluid body is dispersed by a prism, it forms a rainbow-tinted streak, in which all orders of colour from red, through orange, yellow, green, blue, and indigo, to violet, are present, without break or interruption. So that we can compare this rainbow-tinted streak (or *spectrum*, as it is called) with the stream of sound, in which all orders of tone, from one C to the next above it, are heard without break or interruption. We need not concern ourselves about the scientific exactness of the illustration if it suffices for our purpose.*

And now, before proceeding, let us take an example of the application of this first and fundamental fact. With special exceptions, into the nature of which we need not now enter, it may be said that all incandescent solid and fluid bodies show this continuous rainbow-tinted streak, and that only the light from such bodies will exhibit a continuous streak of light from deepest red to deepest violet. This is an experimental fact. Now suppose there is some self-luminous body that we cannot attain to, and we wish to tell what its nature may be. If we find that its light, when dispersed by the prism, shows a continuous rainbow-tinted streak, we can conclude as surely that it is an incandescent solid or fluid, as we could tell that our imagined set of keys from C to C had been swept from end to end if we heard the whole succession of sounds, even though the instrument were out of sight. Always supposing a certain keenness of perception on the part of the auditor, it would make no difference to him whether the musical instrument were close by, or in another room, or even in another house; so long as he heard the whole succession of sounds he would know that the whole series of keys had been struck. And just as certainly the physicist can tell that light comes from an incandescent solid or liquid, because the whole series of colours is present in the spectrum without break or interruption, even though the source of light be millions of miles away. As our imaginary auditor would be certain so long as he could hear the continuous

* It is the attempt to secure at the same time clearness of illustration and strict scientific exactness, which causes so many explanations to perplex instead of edifying. Scientific exactness can come afterwards if the beginner is encouraged to pursue the devious tracks which lead to it, by obtaining a clear view of what he will gain by the labour.

succession of sounds, so the physicist, using the spectroscope, is certain as long as he can see the continuous spectrum.

Let us now consider another case. Suppose certain notes only of those forming our continuous gamut of sound were struck in quick succession. An auditor would be able to tell what those notes were. He would recognise them as a definite set of notes. If the same series were struck simultaneously, either by the fingers of a musician or by some instrument constructed for the purpose, the auditor would be able, if he were a practised musician, to tell the exact set of notes thus sounding simultaneously. But it will be convenient for the purposes of illustration to consider the case of a succession of definite notes; * because every one can understand how such a

* Recently, attention was directed, in the *Quarterly Journal of Science*, to the analogy between sound and light. It appears to us that although such an analogy undoubtedly exists, an attempt was made to push the analogy farther than the evidence warrants. In the spectrum we have a succession of colours precisely as in the gamut we have a succession of notes; but the succession in one case depends on position, in the other on time. The colours of the spectrum are seen to succeed each other as the eye passes from the red end to the violet end; the notes of the gamut succeed each other as they fall one after another on the ear. Hence a chord in music corresponds to a spectrum compounded of several prismatic lines. So far the analogy may be followed. But we cannot reasonably extend the analogy so far as to assert that there is anything in the theory of colours corresponding to the effects produced by concordant or discordant sounds. If three successive notes of the gamut are sounded together we have an unpleasant sound; but if red, orange, and yellow lights are commingled, the resulting light is not unpleasant—no eye can, in fact, distinguish it from pure orange light. And similarly of other combinations. Three or more colours corresponding (so far as the waves of light are concerned) to a pleasing musical chord, produce together a colour which is not a whit more pleasant than the colour produced by mixing three or more colours corresponding to a discordant combination of sounds. Who would pretend to say, for instance, that the coloured rings seen when a lens of glass is pressed against a glass plane, or the colours seen in a bubble, are less pleasing to the eye than the colours of the prismatic spectrum; yet the latter are pure, while the analogue of the former colours in sound would be a series of noises as painful to the ear as saw-filing.

It may be questioned, indeed, whether there is such a thing in nature as an ugly colour, that is a colour which, apart from some association of ideas, is painful to the healthy eye; whereas only certain combinations of sound are pleasing to the tutored ear, and many are essentially painful even to those who have no musical taste.

On the other hand, it is worthy of notice that whereas certain combinations of pure colour by juxtaposition are essentially unpleasant, it may be questioned whether any sequence of simple notes can be so regarded. It would, however, require more space than is here at our disposal to discuss this question, since both the parts into which it divides itself are associated with questions of some difficulty. It would be no easy task to determine either on the one hand the essential principles on which the pleasing or unpleasant effects of juxtaposed colours depend (the laws of complementary colours being by no means sufficient for the purpose), or on the other, the principles which render certain sequences of sound more or less pleasing to us.

succession could be recognised, whereas the musician's power to recognise the component notes of a chord is less common.

Now it is found that when the light of a glowing gas is examined with the spectroscope, it is resolved into a definite number of coloured bands or lines. Some gases show only one or two lines; others many; others, again, show broadish bands, with dark spaces between them. But we may assert in a general way of the spectra of glowing gases that they are discontinuous under ordinary circumstances. Further, setting aside as before certain exceptions, the consideration of which belongs to a more advanced stage of the science, we may say that each gas has its own family of lines, which always make their appearance when the light of that gas is examined. So that we can compare the spectra of gases with the succession of certain definite notes just considered.

The reader will therefore understand the confidence with which the chemist or the astronomer who recognises one of these discontinuous spectra, infers that the source of light is such and such a gas glowing with intensity of heat. Precisely as a musician would have no hesitation in pronouncing that such and such a succession of notes had been struck, even though the performer were in a distant room, so it makes no difference to the physicist whether the source of light is far off or near. So long as he sees in the spectrum a certain succession of coloured lines, he knows certainly that the particular gas which has the power of showing those lines as its spectrum, is the source of light. We can even compare the method which a spectroscopist adopts to assure himself that such and such lines (and not others nearly in the same place) are seen in the spectrum, with those which a musician might employ to assure himself that such and such notes (and not others nearly resembling them) are successively struck by a distant performer. For we can imagine our musician to have before him a piano capable of giving the same continuous succession of notes between two C's, as we have conceived already. If, then, this musician were in doubt whether a certain succession of notes had been struck, he could test the matter by striking that succession himself. He could repeat this process until he struck the exact succession he had heard; and then he would no longer have any doubt as to the nature of that succession. In like manner the spectroscopist who is doubtful whether a certain set of coloured lines really corresponds with a set belonging to a known gas, can cause his spectroscope to show both sets side by side; then if the lines of the two sets agree exactly, line for line (so that each line of one set is in the same line with one of the other set), he knows that the source of light really is the glowing gas he had supposed it to be. If there is no such agreement, he can try other spectra until he finds one which corresponds exactly.

Lastly, there remains to be considered the case where all the notes of the continuous gamut, save a certain definite set of notes, are struck in succession. Suppose the performer to hold down a certain chord while he sweeps the notes from end to end. There would then be heard a succession of notes, with here and there certain breaks. A practised ear could tell as readily what notes corresponded to those breaks as though the notes themselves were separately struck. Or conceive that certain instruments were formed, by each of which a special chord could be held down. Then if any one of these instruments were employed while the notes were swept from end to end as before, the musician could recognise the absence of certain notes, which might (according to the nature of the instrument) be any in number, from one or two to many.

Now it has been found that when an incandescent solid or fluid body is shining through a gaseous or vaporous envelope, the spectrum of the body's light is a rainbow-tinted streak, across which there lie certain dark lines. According to the nature of the gaseous envelope these lines may be more or less numerous. Some gases cause, not lines, but bands, to appear in the spectrum of an incandescent body shining through them. But speaking generally, we may say that the spectrum of such a body is a rainbow-tinted streak crossed by dark lines. Further, setting aside as before certain exceptions, we may say that each gas has the power of producing its own family of dark lines (these dark lines having precisely the same position as the bright lines seen when the spectrum of the same gas is separately examined). So that we may compare the spectrum of an incandescent solid or fluid shining through a gaseous or vaporous envelope with the case in which the continuous gamut of sound is crossed (as it were) by a silent chord.

Hence, in this case, as in the two former, the reader will understand the confidence with which the spectroscopist who recognises certain dark lines across the rainbow-tinted streak forming the continuous spectrum, is able to pronounce that the source of light is an incandescent substance shining through certain gases. A musician who noticed certain gaps in the continuous gamut of sound, could not feel more certain as to the particular notes which were held down (or silent) than the spectroscopist is that the source of light is surrounded by an envelope of such and such a constitution. Distance in the one case makes no more difference than distance in the other, provided always that in one case each sound is distinctly audible, and that in the other each portion of the spectrum is distinctly visible.

In this instance, also, as in the former, it is possible to illustrate the method by which the spectroscopist assures himself that the dark lines in the spectrum correspond to the bright lines of any gas. We can conceive that our musician, recognising the absence of certain notes, and not certain of the power of the unaided ear to determine

what those notes were, might try the experiment of sounding certain notes to see if they corresponded to those of the silent chord. Now precisely in this way the spectroscopist brings a spectrum of bright lines into comparison with the gaps of a spectrum crossed by dark lines: and only when he finds that the bright lines and the dark lines correspond exactly, does he conclude that the particular substance which produces the dark lines exists in the atmosphere surrounding the source of that light which he is analysing.

We are now upon the most important part of our subject, so far at least as the application of spectroscopic analysis to the celestial objects is concerned. For although no inconsiderable proportion of the celestial objects show spectra of bright lines or bright bands, yet the number of different bright-line spectra hitherto recognised is singularly small. All the gaseous nebulae, for example, show the same set of bright lines. Among them are some, indeed, which show only one line, whereas others show three, or even four. But the difference, such as it is, doubtless depends only on the relative brightness of these objects, for where only one line is shown, that line always corresponds with the brightest line of the set of three where that number can be seen. But the number of dark-line spectra seems almost illimitable. Every star has its own peculiar spectrum, as distinct from that of any other star as the spectrum of hydrogen from that of iron. We may arrange the star-spectra into four orders, as Father Secchi has done, or we may arrange them according to other modes of classification; but it is resemblance, not identity, which determines the arrangement. Probably, among all the millions on millions of stars in the sidereal system there are not two which have spectra exactly alike,—or, in other words, there are probably not two suns in the universe which are in precisely the same physical condition.

It is to be noted, further, that those nebulae which have stellar spectra exhibit the same variety in the number, arrangement, and intensity of the dark lines or bands. The planets also, though we examine them under less favourable conditions, show the absorption-bands peculiar to their several atmospheres, and amongst these, too, we find a similar variety. Nay, even one and the same object may present a varying spectrum. Our readers are familiar probably with the change which came over the spectrum of the star *T Coronæ* when this orb suddenly blazed out in May, 1866, after shining for hundreds of years (at least) as a tenth-magnitude star. But there is an instance nearer at hand, in the case of our own sun. Different parts of his surface give different spectra. The spots have not the same spectrum as the bright parts of the disc; the ordinarily bright parts have not the same spectrum as the exceptionally bright parts, called the *faculae*. Then the spectrum of a solar spot is variable, actually changing under the eye of the observer.

It is this wonderful variety in the spectra of the celestial objects which renders it so important that the student of astronomy should recognise the absolute certainty which characterizes the results of spectroscopic research. It seems so amazing that objects lying at distances as enormous as those which separate us even from the nearest fixed star, should yet admit of being analysed, that the student can scarcely believe but that there is some flaw in the reasoning, or some over-confident acceptance of theories which do not admit of proof. When he feels that, wonderful as the new mode of analysis is, its teachings differ only in degree, and not in kind, from the information conveyed by the ear, he grasps at once the full significance and value of the new method. And this is, indeed, a true statement of the case. The great range of the spectroscope seems to make a comparison with any instances of the analysis of audible sounds altogether out of the question. At the outside, sounds can be distinguished at a distance of but a few miles, whereas the new analysis is applied to tell us what is the constitution of orbs whose distance is so enormous that a million of miles is an altogether insufficient unit for their measurement. But when it is remembered that, after all, the same distinction applies to the range of vision as compared with that of hearing, this difficulty vanishes. If we can tell that, in a musical band a few hundred yards off, there are performers on the bassoon, the ophicleide, the big drum, or what not, it is because the distance of the band falls well within the limits to which the hearing extends. And therefore, since our eye-sight ranges over the countless millions of miles which separate us from the stars, it need not be regarded as an incredible thing that an optical instrument should be able to analyse light from such distances, as well as from nearer sources. That power of analysis is, in fact, merely the analogue to the power which the tuning-fork gives the musician to determine the pitch of a note which he hears. For what does the tuning-fork in reality tell the musician in such a case? It tells him that within the limits of his hearing, a cord or metal tongue, or the air within a pipe, or the like, is vibrating at such and such a rate. And precisely of the same nature is the information conveyed by a dark line or bright line in the spectrum of a celestial object. It tells the observer that within the limits of vision (aided, if need be, by the telescope) some molecules or atoms are vibrating at a particular rate, so as to send out, or to absorb, light of a certain colour.

Even the work of the telescope in aiding the spectroscope has its analogue in the theory of sound. The true analogue is not to be sought (as we have seen stated) in the power of sounding-boards, or vessels of a certain shape to condense sound near its source. The speaking-trumpet of the seaman is not a sound-telescope, though it causes sounds to be perceived at a distance. Nor can we regard the phenomena of whispering galleries as in any sense illustrating the work

of the telescope. But an ear-trumpet is a true analogue of the telescope. Such a case also as that well-known one in which the sound of bells ringing a hundred miles away, was rendered audible to men at sea by the action of the ship's mainsail, tautened by the wind into a vast curved reflector, illustrates exactly the work of the great curved mirror of the Rosse telescope. If a musician on board that ship, provided with a tuning-fork, or several, had tested the sounds thus rendered audible by the sail-reflector, he would have been doing, in the case of those sounds, precisely what the spectroscopist does in the case of light gathered up for him, so to speak, by a powerful telescope.

It may occur to the reader to inquire whether the phenomena of sound which thus satisfactorily illustrate the simpler phenomena dealt with by the spectroscope, may also be employed to illustrate some of those special modes of research to which that instrument has been applied. We propose now to show how aptly the analogy we have followed out so far may be employed to illustrate two subjects which have lately attracted a large share of attention, and have been regarded as specially surprising.

The first is the application of the spectroscope to determine the rate at which a celestial object is moving directly from or towards the eye.

Now it is to be remarked that not only does the theory of sound *illustrate*, but it actually *suggested*, this singular mode of research. It had been suggested, as a result of the nature of sound, that if a source of sound is approaching, or receding very rapidly (whether by its own motion or the hearer's), the tone of the sound must be affected. For the tone of a simple sound depends on the rapidity with which the sound-waves successively reach the ear, and clearly more or fewer will reach the ear in a given time if the source of sound is approaching or receding, respectively. Experiment showed this to be the case. Indeed, Professor Tyndall has remarked that, without our having to renew the elaborate experiments by which the theoretical deduction was shown to accord with observed facts, every one who has heard the peculiar change in the tone of a railway whistle as the train sweeps past us (first rapidly approaching and then as rapidly receding) has had this fact sufficiently demonstrated to him.

It was argued by Doppler that a corresponding peculiarity ought to affect the light of a star, which, either through its own motion or ours (or both), was very rapidly approaching or receding. In the former case its light, he reasoned, ought to be bluish, in the latter reddish,—this relation corresponding to the length of the waves of light of different colours. His reasoning was incomplete, though we need not here enter into the explanation of its weak points. Suffice it to say that, though no peculiarities of *colour* could be expected to

arise in this way, yet the lines of the spectrum—which correspond, as we have seen, to musical notes—ought to be appreciably changed in place, if only the rate at which a star recedes or approaches bears an appreciable relation to the amazing velocity of light. We believe that Dr. Huggins was the first who put the idea forward in this practical form. Professor Maxwell made the requisite mathematical inquiries, and confirmed Dr. Huggins's view; and as every one knows, or ought to know, Dr. Huggins presently applied the method so successfully as to be able to prove that Sirius is receding from us at the rate of several hundred miles per second. The method has also been successfully applied to determine the velocity with which cyclonic storms sweep over the surface of the sun. The results on this point may be accepted as proving—if not actually, that the solar hurricanes move so many miles per second, at least—that they have a very enormous velocity.

This brings us to the other instance in which the phenomena of sound serve to illustrate the results of spectroscopic research.

Few circumstances have ever attracted more notice than the discovery that the bright lines which form the spectrum of the solar prominences can be seen when the sun is shining in full splendour. It is known that the ordinary appliances for viewing the sun fail altogether to show the prominences—for this very excellent reason, that the light of our own atmosphere, when illuminated by the solar rays, is so many times stronger than the light of the prominences as to obliterate those objects. We may, by means of dark glasses or like appliances, reduce the atmospheric light as much as we please; but we reduce, *pari passu*, the light of the prominences, and they “go out” altogether while the atmospheric light is still strong.

Under these circumstances, it seems incredible that the spectroscope should be able to make the prominence lines visible, and still more that the prominences themselves should become visible (as they actually do) by the aid of this instrument. But the analogy of the musical continuous gamut at once explains the mystery:—

We have seen that the continuous spectrum corresponds to the continuous gamut of sounds, the juxtaposition of colours in the spectrum corresponding to the succession of notes in the gamut. And the longer the spectrum the slower the succession of notes must be supposed to be, for distances along the spectrum are analogous to time-intervals in the sounding of the gamut. Now, if all the time that the gamut is being swept a certain note is sounding, we should clearly have so much the better chance of hearing this note, as the gamut was the more slowly sounded. If the gamut was very slowly swept we should be sure to hear the sound. Now, precisely in the same way, if while we get a rainbow-tinted streak (our gamut of light) as the spectrum of the illuminated air, we also get from the prominences certain bright lines, we shall clearly have so much the better chance

of seeing the latter as the former spectrum has the greater length ; and if the length of the atmospheric spectrum is made very considerable, we shall be sure to see the bright lines of the prominences.

In the same way, the visibility of the prominences themselves, as distinguished from the visibility of their bright-line spectrum, is illustrated by the analogy of sound. The bright lines, be it remembered, are merely images of the slit which admits the light. When this slit is widened, we get images of the prominence instead of images of the slit, for the prominence is then wholly included within the opened slit. The case may be compared to that of a picture concealed by two curtains which can be opened by drawing them horizontally apart, so as to disclose a vertical section of the picture. Here, if the curtains were nearly closed, we should have a mere strip of the picture visible—a vertical bar, so to speak ; whereas, when the curtain is fully open, we have no such vertical limits to the objects forming the picture, but see their true shape.

Returning to our musical illustration, we must conceive that in place of a note, sounding uniformly all the time that the gamut is being swept, the note is repeated some set number of times at definite time-intervals—as, for instance, three semiquavers, a quaver, a crochet, and three semiquavers. The recognition of this fact by the auditor would correspond exactly to the recognition of the shape of a prominence by the spectroscopist, and precisely as the former would be rendered so much the easier according as the gamut (whose sound would partially hide the sound of the single note) was more slowly swept, so the recognition of the figure of a prominence by means of the spectroscope is rendered so much the easier according as the spectrum of the illuminated atmosphere (which partially obliterates the image of the prominence) is made of greater length by the dispersive power of the spectroscope.

It has been asked what prospects there are that the history of the spectroscope will resemble that of the telescope, insomuch that at some distant date men will look back at what we are now doing as we look back at the work of Galileo or Huyghens. This is a question which it is not very easy to answer. There are, undoubtedly, limits to the powers of the spectroscope as there are to those of the telescope ; but whether those limits have been already nearly reached, or will only be reached after a long interval of years, is not so easy to determine. Taking for our guidance the case of the telescope, we should have to regard the present work of the spectroscopist as unimportant compared with that which future ages will see. We should gather that the labours of a Huggins in our day bear the same relation to the work of future years, as those of Galileo bore to the researches of the Herschels, Rosse, and Lassell. But we are inclined to view the matter somewhat less hopefully, to regard the first ten years of the spectroscope's history as comparable rather with

the interval between Galileo and the elder Herschel than with that during which the first feeble efforts of telescopists were directed to celestial exploration. There will doubtless be improvements in spectroscopic appliances, as there will doubtless be improvements in telescopes; but there is little reason to hope that the work of any future spectroscopist will as far surpass what Huggins has done, as the labours of Sir W. Herschel surpassed those of Galileo. Presently, indeed, we may hear of great results obtained by Dr. Huggins himself. With a far more powerful telescope and a corresponding increase in the dispersive powers of his spectroscopes, he is about to renew his researches into the celestial depths. But while full of hope, or rather, we should say, while absolutely certain, that the results will be of the utmost importance to science, it would be too much to hope that they can be comparable in interest with those with which but four or five years ago Dr. Huggins startled the astronomical world.

Our opticians are not idle in devising new means of attacking celestial problems. Mr. Browning's automatic spectroscope, for instance, is most ingeniously contrived to purify the spectrum—to make the gamut of light run smoothly from C to C. By this contrivance, any part of a spectrum can be examined as satisfactorily, after dispersion through six prisms, as though a single prism alone were used, and, of course, with far more important results. But the principle can probably be extended (indeed the present writer has contrived an arrangement for the purpose) to give a pure spectrum of much greater extension.

There remains, however, in all such arrangements the necessity for increased light-gathering power. We can only apply the spectroscope effectually to light which has been gathered for us by the telescope. The problem, therefore, which telescopists have been so long attacking, that of increasing the light-gathering and defining qualities of their instruments until the great Rosse telescope comes to be smiled at as a rather puny instrument, affects importantly the fate of the spectroscope also. Sir David Brewster said that "the long interval of half a century seems to be the period of hibernation during which the telescopic mind rests from its labours in order to acquire strength for some great achievement." If this is so, the time is approaching when a telescope, powerful enough to dwarf the fame of the Parsonstown reflector, should be in process of construction. When that new telescope is completed, we may look for very important spectroscopic discoveries.

RICHARD A. PROCTOR.

CONVIVIAL PAUPERISM.

SPENDING Christmas day, 1869, with one of the guardians of the B—— Union, a worthy member of the Society of Friends, I was invited by him to pass an hour or two at the workhouse; and I gladly accepted the invitation.

We took with us large supplies of tobacco, cigars, snuff, nuts, oranges, and coppers for distribution, the guardians allowing the paupers to beg from visitors on Christmas day, and Christmas day only. A pleasant half-hour's drive along the outskirts of the city brought us to the splendid pile of buildings—architecturally speaking—in which two or three thousand of our fellow-creatures were endeavouring to enjoy the happiest day of all the year to the utmost extent the Poor Law Board and the Board of Guardians would allow. The B—— Union workhouse is situated in a charming country spot on the summit of a hill. Surrounded by its own grounds and plantation, as well as by a picturesque neighbourhood, viewed from the distance it has a very imposing aspect; in fact, the exterior of the building cannot fail to lead passers-by to contrast its ornate appearance with the misery within. My friend tells me it is a model workhouse, and that guardians of the poor come from all parts of the country to inspect its arrangements. I thought a less costly building would have answered the purpose of the union equally as well, and that a goodly portion of its cost—part of the money is still owing—might have been employed in alleviating unusually severe outdoor cases of distress. He agreed with me, and had he been a guardian at the time of building, would have objected to the expenditure of so much money for ornament. He further informed me that, owing to its grand appearance, it is in the vicinity frequently denominated “the palace for the people.”

We pass through the entrance hall, and after inspecting the master's offices and the awe-inspiring board-room, where *Oliver Twist* and the sweep *must* have been only five minutes before, we proceed to the circular kitchen. This apartment presented a lively scene. Able-bodied male paupers were carving huge joints into small square pieces, and able-bodied female paupers were serving the vegetables, while other able-bodied paupers of both sexes carried the Christmas fare to the various wards—in their hurry occasionally upsetting each other, and then scrambling the provisions into the tin plates again with their hands. All parts of the house were tastefully—nay, beautifully—decorated with evergreens and devices made of paper-flowers, all the

work of the inmates. Near the kitchen door was the following inscription, painted, and I presume composed, by one of the paupers:—

"Merry Christmas is come, and happy are we,
With our beef, plum-pudding, and Christmas tree;
Then hurrah for the guardians! a cheer for all those
Who have brought the old year to so merry a close."

Above these lines was the representation of two aged paupers dancing with delight round an immense Christmas pudding—not a bad work of art for a pauper.

In the centre of the kitchen was the immense apparatus for cooking vegetables, consisting of several compartments, into which—the vegetables having been previously deposited therein—a constant and continual supply of steam is introduced until the cooking is complete. Each adult is allowed on Christmas day one pound of roast beef, with potatoes and parsnips *ad lib.*, and a pint of ale to wash it all down. I encountered the doctor in one of the wards, and asked him how many of the inmates he expected would die in consequence of over-feeding. "We have generally a heavy bill of mortality Christmas week," was his arch answer. Expressing a desire to test the quality of the provisions, we were directed to a snug little room at the side of the kitchen, where shortly afterwards two plates of roast beef and potatoes made their appearance. Both beef and potatoes were *very good*. My friend being rather corpulent and not so young as he once was, required some rest after the exertion of eating; so, leaving him in the matron's room, I returned to the kitchen, the matron attending to give any information I might require. I wished to closely examine the provisions. The kitchen was still in full bustle, the dinner-bell ringing, the maids and women chattering, the men shouting, knives and forks rattling, the steam hissing, and altogether such noise and confusion—not altogether unpleasant—as one seldom meets with indoors. On inspecting the joints, all prime meat, I found that some were scarcely warm through, while others were burnt almost to cinders. Insisting on tasting a sample of each, the matron apologetically observed, "You see, sir, we have to consider the tastes of all parties. If they like their meat 'underdone,' we give them *this*; if they prefer it 'well done,' we give them *that*." One was tasteless, being burnt; the other insipid, being raw. Both were cold.

"Supposing an aged or infirm pauper wanted beef not overdone, would you give this?" asked I, pointing to one of the samples.

"Certainly."

"Then allow me to say that in my opinion you would not be doing your duty to the poor."

"The guardians are the best judges of that," she sharply replied.

Bearing in mind the peculiar proceedings of several very respectable boards of guardians, I could not agree with her, but I did not say so.

The potatoes served out to the paupers were almost black,—indeed

I have seen better ones given to the pigs,—and were *shovelled* into boxes with a common shovel; the parsnips, the only other vegetable supplied, were apparently nicely cooked, judging from the sample on my own plate, and looked palatable. I did not taste the ale.

Being rejoined by my friend, I called his attention to the badly-cooked joints, and he was nearly as incensed as I had been, and administered a severe reprimand to the master, for his carelessness, who, however, threw the blame upon "the cook." The master and matron were both excessively attentive to us, too attentive for my purpose, as they tried to hurry us through the different rooms. Giving my friend a hint to this effect, he took the keys of the wards from the master, and we pursued our investigations alone. We proceeded through a long cold passage to the "aged and infirm women's wards," where some hundred poor old souls in various stages of helplessness were either feeding themselves, or were being fed. One old lady, nearly ninety, had made for herself a Christmas cap with coloured paper, of which she seemed as proud as a young lady of her court-dress; another confidentially showed me a worn letter from her son, long since deceased, of whom, the nurse informed us, she was continually talking, and whose last letter she was constantly spelling over. Another, too ill to eat anything, was lying in bed with her face to the wall, taking notice of nothing that was going on around, and although she was not long for this world, little attention was paid to her comfort, for immediately over her head was an open window, and three or four other windows in the ward were also wide open. In fact I felt cold even with my overcoat closely buttoned. Never in my life had I seen so much misery, except in the squalid dwellings of the very, very poor in our large cities, where, no doubt, the aged and infirm would receive even less attention than they did here. Before leaving this ward the puddings were brought in, and were really eatable. They had been boiled in cylinders of eighteen inches circumference, and a piece six inches in diameter was cut off for each person. We next proceeded to the ward where the able-bodied men and the "casuals" were at dinner, and very noisy and convivial most of them seemed. Exceptions, however, there were. Sullen, morose-looking fellows shrank back into corners as we approached, and although the tobacco and coppers, which they received with a grunt, tempted them from their retreats, they quickly retired to them again. It was a sad sight, so many strong men living upon the rates, perhaps the saddest in the house. And here let me say a few words concerning the working of the law, which drives, actually drives, and keeps some of these able-bodied men upon the union funds.

A well-educated man, the father of six hearty children, had the misfortune to become deaf, and, in consequence, was discharged from his situation as clerk, which he had held for many years at a very small

salary, so small that he had found it impossible to lay by something for "a rainy day." His loss so preyed upon his mind that fever was the result, and he was ill for three months. During his illness, in order to provide necessaries for her sick husband and family and to pay the rent, his wife, a delicately-reared woman, sold part of the furniture. He eventually got better, and at once sought for employment, but owing to his infirmity he was for two months unsuccessful, and then he obtained a situation as porter, at fifteen shillings a week. Shortly afterwards his wife fell ill, and for a long time she lingered in a state of extreme weakness, when at length death released her from that misery, which, the doctor said, had broken her heart. Friendless and poor, the husband nearly starved himself and his children in order to bury his wife decently. He sold every vestige of furniture, except a kitchen-table, three chairs, and the beds, which were placed upon the floor, and even these few things in the course of a week or two were seized *for the non-payment of poor-rates!* What could he do now? He went to the relieving-officer, who refused to grant him out-door relief. The prescription of the guardians also, to whom he appealed, was "the house." And to "the house" the family went. They were there better fed than at home, and the father gathered strength, and his deafness decreasing, he thought it time to look for a situation. Having no money to buy newspapers, he could not see the advertisements announcing vacancies, and whenever he was allowed to discharge himself from the house to seek employment, the affectionate poor-laws, after separating him from his children in the house, thoughtfully ordered that he should always take his six children out with him, for fear that he would never come back to them, or be a further burden upon the rates, which by this time he would have helped to pay, had he, in the first instance, been assisted with temporary out-door relief. The result was that whenever he availed himself of the permission to seek a situation, he and his family tasted no food all day, the workhouse authorities refusing them re-admittance before night. As might have been expected, the father became tired of hearing the cry of his children for bread, and preferring half a loaf to none at all, he and they have become, unless some mighty revolution occurs, permanent paupers. This is only one case out of hundreds of a similar character showing the pauperising tendency of the poor-laws. Can we wonder that, "Once a pauper, always a pauper?"

The imbecile wards next claimed our attention, and we were greatly pleased with the thorough cleanliness of the apartments and of the bedding. Here, however, as in all other parts of the house, were too many open windows, and more cold air than was required for ventilation. The dangerous patients, the maniacs, were strapped to their beds in a separate room, guarded by two big keepers. Some, we noticed, were devouring their food like beasts, while others were too

obstinate to eat at all. Their fearful howling and yelling soon drove us away.

Returning to the male imbecile wards we found that all the occupants, however deficient in other knowledge, understood the value of money, and were not unacquainted with the use of the "fragrant weed," both in the form of tobacco and snuff, the old men being unaccountably fond of the latter. Large quantities of oranges and nuts were also distributed. The walls of all the lunatic wards, I must not omit to state, were covered with paintings executed, in the most gorgeous and glittering colours, by the inmates. A loyal pauper, an old man, had decorated one of the rooms with portraits of the various members of the royal family. In another apartment a radical painter had been equally clever in depicting Washington, Oliver Cromwell, John Bright, Mr. Gladstone, and Mr. George Odger. Among other portraits in various rooms were pictures of murderers, highwaymen, and other criminals. I particularly noticed life-size portraits of Müller, Dick Turpin, Claude Duval, and Jack Sheppard, and wondered why the master and the guardians allowed them to remain. The walls were also adorned with paintings of naval and military heroes, and pictorial representations of the battles and victories of which Englishmen are proud.

One could have spent the whole of the day with these "daft" folks, if only in listening to what they had to say. An old gentleman between seventy and eighty mysteriously beckoned me into a corner, and as mysteriously unbuttoned his jacket in order to display to my, of course enraptured, gaze, a lot of brass buttons strung together, and to tell me how rich he was, and that he was afraid of exhibiting his treasures openly because his companions would certainly murder him in order to obtain possession of them. Several times they had attempted to rob and murder him, he said.

The keeper afterwards informed us that he had been a small farmer, had worked hard, and scraped together a few hundred pounds, and had almost worshipped them. One unlucky day he was prevailed upon by a plausible agent to invest his all in a bubble company ("limited")—the crash came, and the poor farmer was a wreck, mentally and financially.

Another old fellow told me in confidence that he was elder brother to Queen Victoria, and, by right, sovereign of Great Britain. He showed me a letter headed *Dieu et mon droit* he had just written to his august ally the King of Mesopotamia, requesting him to declare war against the government of England for refusing to recognise his claims, and against France for aiding and abetting England therein. He expected, he told me, a letter every moment from his ambassador at the court of Peking, the Emperor of China being so favourably inclined towards him that he would have declared war against England long ago, but for the distressing fact that his mother-in-law wouldn't allow him to spend any of his pocket-money!

Poor, unhappy—ay, yet happy—mortals. Content and cheerful; no complaining, no murmuring; thankful for the least attention or kindness, treated with care and consideration—they are better off than many a sane man. Thank heaven! *all* boards of guardians are not entirely selfish and callous.

On entering the female imbecile wards we were greatly astonished at the different behaviour of the occupants, as compared with that of the sterner sex. The men were all as grave as senators *are supposed to be*; the women were as noisy as birds in a rookery, all talking and shouting at the same time, each in a different tone, and upon diverse subjects. They became comparatively quiet on seeing us prepare to distribute our snuff and fruit, one or two old ladies anxiously inquiring whether we would sell them all the snuff we had with us, to be paid for "next Christmas." One old woman showed us a short, dirty pipe, and asked for tobacco, remarking that "snuff would do very well for the *girls*."

On receiving their little packages they danced and sang, and ultimately became so unruly that the keeper threatened to lock all of them up for the rest of the day. This threat produced order for a time, and during the pause we were enabled to observe the stage and the actors. Females, whose ages ranged from three to eighty, were there, dressed all alike, young and old, in short checked frocks and long unbleached pinafores, and representing every degree of imbecility, although to look at and speak with several of them you would think them as sane as yourself. One young girl, with a fresh complexion and beautiful black eyes, really quite a handsome lass, particularly attracted our attention. For three or four weeks together, the attendant informed us, she would be quite rational, and then would be seized with madness of a terrible character. We remained in conversation with this young woman a considerable time, and found her ordinarily intelligent. There was a large swing at one end of the room, and she proposed that my friend the fat guardian should place himself therein, and allow the girls to give him a swing. He got in, and I was about to follow when she caught me by the arm, and whispered, "Don't you go; stop here and see the fun."

I stopped there and saw the fun; but I question whether my friend did. A dozen of the girls, first of all, swung him backwards and forwards, gently, and he was exclaiming, "Beautiful! Delightful!" when the motion became swifter and swifter, until every ascent threatened to throw him out; but he held firmly to the rods, and breathlessly shouted, "Stop, stop!"

The giddy girls paid no attention to my requests for the discontinuance of their sport until the attendants, seeing the state of the case, made a rush to the end of the room, and quickly dispersed the mischief-loving and mischief-making damsels.

They then treated us to some singing, which was accompanied by one of the patients on a worn-out pianoforte, or rather a *pianopiano*, for there was nothing *forte* about it, except perhaps its age. During one of the songs an old lady of fifty whispered to me, "You would hardly think it, would you, that every one of these people are mad, and the attendants here, and me, are the only sensible persons in the place?"

I looked at her. Was I talking to a mad woman? Yes! there was no doubt about it—her dress proved it. She then began muttering to herself, and presently addressed me again, catching hold of my coat collar.

"Ann, take your hands off the gentleman, immediately," said one of the attendants.

She did so, and retired to the nearest corner. All at once she came rushing forward, grasped me a second time with both hands, and shook me with such vigour that I scarcely knew where I was, yelling in a terrific manner all the while.

"You —, you —," she shouted, "you think I'm mad like the rest, —don't you?" and, uttering the most frightful curses, continued shaking me in such a violent manner as I had never before experienced. I thought it an excellent joke—after the first shock, and until the keeper came near and with one good blow of her fist sent the old lady sprawling on the floor, pulling me down with her—then I thought differently. Of course I was speedily liberated from her wild embrace, and she was carried off to another ward to undergo some sort of punishment, which we earnestly begged—on being told that discipline *must* be enforced—might be as mild as possible.

This *finale* to our otherwise agreeable sojourn and entertainment precipitated our departure, although some of the inmates would not allow us to leave without shaking hands, while others insisted upon being kissed, the performance of the latter ceremony being entrusted to myself alone, as the younger of the two visitors, my friend the guardian standing upon his dignity also.

The schools were next visited—boys', girls', and infants'. We visited the last first. The same excess of cold air, the same cleanliness, the same immaculate attendants cringing and curtsying *ad nauseam*. I must here enter a solemn protest against what I saw in the infant ward. Half a dozen babes, aged from one to ten months, were lying in a sort of basket close under a large window, wide open, and they were exposed not only to the draught from this window, but from others, and open doors as well. Four of them were awake, and two asleep; those awake were crying piteously, most probably because of the intense cold. So while my friend was talking to the other children, I remonstrated with the nurse in charge respecting the cruelty of the proceeding, and her reply was, as I anticipated, she "had her orders." It was now three o'clock and very foggy, so I

closed the windows myself. We afterwards complained to the master. He was "exceedingly sorry, he had certainly given orders for all the windows in the house to be open, but not until so late in the day."

The infant school is composed of orphans, foundlings, and the youthful offspring of parents who have been compelled, or have chosen to seek, the workhouse as a temporary refuge.

Our visit to the young ones, and the distribution amongst them of oranges, nuts, apples, and money, was a proceeding I shall never cease to remember. It was the pleasantest occupation of the day. So friendless and forlorn did they appear, in spite of their good dinner, that I impulsively offered to adopt the whole batch, with the trifling exception of eight or ten, whose phrenological development was so exceedingly "animal" that my timid nerves were on the rack at the bare thought of having them always with me; but my Quaker friend shrewdly advised me to try *one* first.

The poor youngsters, big and little, were all clad in clothes of uniform shape, and by some peculiar method of distribution, the little children seemed to wear all the big garments, and the big ones all the little garments. They were made to sing several school-pieces, which they did very creditably—some of them shivering with the cold though—and then, as we were leaving the room, the poor little atoms were told to stand up and whine "God bless our noble-hearted guardians."

We then passed to the boys' school and the girls' school, in both of which there was too much servility, as well as a thorough lack of that spirit of honest self-reliance and youthful independence which should animate even workhouse boys and girls, and without which man is a mere machine.

As we entered the schools the girls curtsied and the boys made their best bows, not only once, but a dozen times, concluding—of course having received the cue—with the eternal "God bless our noble-hearted guardians!" The only representative of our noble-hearted guardians present—I am sorry to say—was my stout friend, who thought it his duty to deliver a very improving lecture upon contentment and the vanity of accumulating riches. He recited several of "Poor Richard's" sayings, and then bade them all good-bye, to be good boys and girls, to be honest, and do their duty in that state of life, &c.; and he hoped and trusted, and believed and felt assured, that in years to come they would all be respectable citizens like Harry Smith, who was once a workhouse boy; but thanks to his hard-working and harder living, and chiefly by the attention he had paid to the didactic speeches of his betters (*viz.*, the guardians, more than a third of whom could not properly write their names), had now become a worthy, civil, obliging, deserving, and flourishing shop-keeper in the greengrocery line.

Upon the conclusion of this eloquent address the shouts of "God bless our noble-hearted guardians" were renewed with increased

vigour. It nevertheless struck me, that if I had the distinguished honour of being a "noble-hearted," I should certainly wish to see a little more spirit and earnestness than were manifested on this occasion. For the next half-hour we listened to the playing of the drum-and-sife band; and so skilfully did the performers acquit themselves that we presented each with a shilling, receiving in return, given with great gusto this time, the watchword of the day, "God bless our noble-hearted guardians." A visit to the chapel, which was beautifully decorated with evergreens, &c., store-rooms, officers' quarters, and chaplain's apartments, brought our Christmas day in the workhouse to a close.

I was pleased with the cleanliness throughout the house, and with the guardians for providing the paupers with a bountiful dinner. I was displeased—and it is at the suggestion of my guardian friend that I publicly say so—I was displeased with the sinful spoiling of good food by bad cooking; with the very cold atmosphere of the room where lay the new-born babes; with the cold apartments of the aged and infirm, in one of which, as I stated before, was a pauper dying immediately under an open window, the other occupants of the room feasting and trying to make merry; with the carelessness and cruelty of some of the officers; with the method of training adopted in the schools; and especially with the associating of the rogues and vagabonds with the honest poor, such contact, in my estimation, producing the most pernicious results.

A careful classification of paupers, as recommended long ago by Poor-Law reformers, must be made ere many years have elapsed; and I hope a separate house altogether will be provided for the deserving poor, for at present they are worse off in the Union workhouse than in prison. I am not a chronic grumbler, neither am I a prophet; but I am firmly convinced that the sooner we commence a wholesale revision of the poor-laws the better will it be for the stability of our constitution. *Verb. sap.*

JAMES PITT.

HANNAH.

A Novel.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "JOHN HALIFAX, GENTLEMAN."

"None ever feared that the truth should be heard,
But those whom the truth wad indite."—BURNS.

CHAPTER I.

"A STRANGE, sad kind of letter," said Miss Thelluson to herself, as she refolded and replaced it in its envelope: she had a habit of always putting things back into their right places. "I suppose I ought to answer it at once. And yet——"

She stopped; leant her elbow on the table, her head upon her hand, and pressed down her eyelids. They were wet eyelids—though she was not exactly weeping—and tired eyes; for it was late at night, and she had had a hard day's work, of teaching first, and private study, in order to teach, afterwards; since, not being a brilliantly clever woman, it cost her some pains to keep up to the level of accomplishments required of a first-class governess in a "high" family.

"High" though it was, an earl's indeed—and though the little Ladies Mary, Georgina, and Blanche, now safely asleep in their beds, were good, pleasant children, and very fond of their governess—still, as she sat in that homely-furnished, dimly-lighted sitting-room, Hannah Thelluson looked a lonely kind of woman; not one of those likely to make many friends, or keep up a large correspondence. This letter, which seemed to affect her a good deal, was the only one which she had received for days past, and the servants had forgotten to bring it up until they brought her supper: it did not matter, being only for the governess. Miss Thelluson was scarcely sorry: it was best read when she was alone. For it was from her brother-in-law, the husband of her lately-dead sister.

"Poor Rosa!" she sighed, as her eyes fell on the big, upright, rather peculiar handwriting which she had scarcely seen since the time when she used to bring in Rosa's daily love-letters—"and poor Mr. Rivers, too!"

She had never learned to call him anything but Mr. Rivers; for the marriage, which had all come about when Rosa was on a visit, had been a sudden, frantic love-match, between a rich young man and a lovely penniless girl; and during their brief bright year of wedded

happiness, the elder sister had seen almost nothing of them, beyond a formal three-days' visit. But even that had been enough to make Hannah not regret that her duties had stood in the way of her pleasures, and caused her to feel by instinct that a grave governess-sister was not likely to advance young Mrs. Rivers's dignity in the eyes of Lady Rivers and the people at the Moat-House, who had looked very coldly on the marriage. And when fate suddenly broke the tie, leaving Mr. Rivers a sorrowing widower with a little month-old daughter instead of the longed-for son and heir, Hannah bitterly felt that whosoever might grieve after poor Rosa, it would not be her husband's family.

They merely communicated to her the fact of the death, which, like the birth, had taken place abroad; and except a brief answer from the grandmother to a letter she wrote, inquiring after the baby, she had heard no more. She could not leave her duties; she had to sit still and suffer—silently, as working women must, and patiently, as women learn to suffer who have been, to use that most pathetic of phrases, “acquainted with grief.” She had put forward no claim either for sympathy or consideration to her brother-in-law or his relatives, and believed that henceforth the slight intercourse she ever had with them was probably ended. Therefore she was a good deal surprised to receive this letter, which entreated of her the very last thing she would have expected—that she would assume a sister's place towards Mr. Rivers, and come and take charge of his household, and especially of her little motherless niece.

“How strange!” she kept thinking. “How can he want me when he has sisters of his own?” But then she remembered that the Misses Rivers were young and lively women, very much out in society, and probably not inclined to burthen themselves with the care of a widower's dreary house and a widower's forlorn infant, even for the sake of their own flesh-and-blood brother. So he came for help to his wife's sister—who, though almost a stranger to himself, could not but feel, he said, the strong tie of blood which bound her to his child. He pleaded, for this child's sake, that she would come.

Hannah could not help feeling pleased and touched. It was a sort of compliment which, coming to her, a lonely woman, and from a person of whom she knew so little, was rather pleasant than not. She tried to recall all she had ever noticed of her brother-in-law—not very much; except that, though he was young, handsome, and rather excitable, there seemed a simplicity and affectionateness about him which she had rather liked. Still, in their slight intercourse, the only thing the sister had ever cared to find out was that he loved Rosa and Rosa loved him. Satisfied of these two facts, she had left the young people to their happiness, and gone back to her own quiet life; which would have been a dreary life, had she herself been a less self-dependent and unexact woman.

And now the happiness, which she might have envied had she seen more of it, was over and done. Bright, beautiful Rosa had lain six months in her grave; and here was Rosa's husband asking the solitary sister to fulfil towards him and his child all the duties of a near and dear relative. For he addressed her as "my dear sister;" and in his letter, which was impulsive, fragmentary, and evidently in earnest, he seemed to fling himself upon her pity and help, as if he had no one else to appeal to.

"I have been reading over again the letters you used to send weekly to my poor Rosa," he wrote; "it is these which have induced me to make this request: for they convince me that you must be a good woman—a woman fitted to give help and consolation to such a forlorn creature as I am. How forlorn, you little know! A man who has had a wife and lost her, is the wretchedest creature on earth—infinitely more wretched than one who has never known that blessing. Every day, every hour, I miss my darling. Continually I hear, in a sort of ghostly way, her step about the house, her voice outside in the garden; till sometimes, in the excessive loneliness, I am actually frightened—not of her, but of myself—lest I should be going mad. Men do go mad with grief sometimes, especially husbands who have lost their wives. I have read several such cases in the newspapers lately: my eye seems to light upon them, and my mind to retain them, with a horrible pertinacity. But why trouble you with these personalities? No more."

And then he began to describe his baby; saying she was a dear little thing, but that he did not understand her. She seemed to be always crying, and nobody could manage her, though he saw a different woman almost every time he came into the nursery.

When she first read this passage Hannah had started up, her always pale face hot and warm. The weak point in her nature—rather a pathetic weakness in one whom some people called, and she herself firmly believed to be, a born old maid—was her love of children. Her heart had yearned oftentimes over Rosa's motherless babe, but she felt that she could not interfere with the grandmother and father. Now the picture of it—transferred from nurse to nurse, neglected or ignored—smote her with a sort of self-reproach, as if her pride or her shyness, or both, had led her weakly to desert her own flesh and blood—her sister's child.

"I ought to have gone and seen it—seen what they were doing with it. I have as much right to it as any one of them all. Poor little baby! Rosa's very own baby!"

The tears, which came so rarely and painfully to her eyes, came now; and they did her good. It seemed to open and warm her heart even to think of that little baby.

Gradually her thoughts took shape and purpose. Though she seldom meditated much upon herself, still Miss Thelluson had not lived

thirty years in this troublesome world without knowing her own character pretty well. She was quite aware of one great want in her nature—the need to be a mother to somebody or something. It came out even towards the large white cat that lived in the school-room, and loved the governess better than any creature in the house. It had helped her to manage many a difficult pupil, and stood her in good stead with her little Ladies Dacre, who, before she came, had been rather disagreeable and unmanageable children. Now they were very good, and loved her with all their aristocratic little hearts—as warm as other hearts, though perhaps more suppressed. She loved them also; but it was rather a sad kind of affection, as she knew it could be only temporary. They would drift away from her, and marry earls and dukes; and she would be no more to them than “our old governess.” It was nearly the same with other little folks of her own rank—the children of her friends or schoolfellows—who generally called her Aunt Hannah, and were very fond of her while she was with them; but, of course, soon forgot her when she was away. All natural—quite natural; yet it sometimes seemed rather sad.

Now here was a child to whom she had an actual right of blood. Whether or not the Rivers family had liked Rosa, or herself, they could not abolish the fact that she was the child’s aunt; and, if the father desired it, its natural guardian. The first impulse of strangeness and shrinking passed away, and as she read over again Mr. Rivers’s letter, and began clearly to comprehend what he wished, there grew up a longing, indescribable, after that duty which was set before her in such a sudden and unexpected way; yet which, the more she thought about it, seemed the more distinct and plain.

She dried her eyes, and, late as it was, prepared to answer the letter, knowing she would not have leisure to do it next morning before post-time. Besides, she wished to “sleep upon it,” as people say; and then read it over again in the calm light of day: Hannah Thelluson being one of those people who dislike doing things in a hurry, but who, having once put their hands to the plough, never look back.

She was fully aware that if she acceded to her brother-in-law’s request she must not look back; however difficult the position might be, it would be still more difficult to quit it and return to her old calling as a governess. And that provision for her old age, which she was year by year slowly accumulating,—with the pathetic prudence of a woman who knows well that only her own labour stands between her and the workhouse,—that too must be given up. For Mr. Rivers would, of course, offer her no salary; and, if he did, how could she possibly accept it? Was she not coming to his house as a sister, with all the honours and some few of the bondages of that relationship? Her common sense told her that, pleasant as in some measure her duties might be, they entailed considerable sacrifices as well. But women like her, though they dislike taking a leap in the dark, will

often take a most difficult and dangerous one with their eyes open, fully counting the cost.

"Yes. I will venture it," she said, after a long pause of thought. "The risk cannot be much,—and it is only my own, after all."

So she sat down to write her letter.

While she does so, let us look at her,—the solitary governess whom few ever looked at now.

Miss Thelluson could not have been handsome, even in her first youth, which was past now. Her face was long and thin; her eyes deep-set, though they were sweet eyes in themselves, grave and tender, and of a soft grey. Her hair was of no particular colour,—in fact, she had no special attraction of any kind, except a well-proportioned figure, which in motion had a willowy grace, that some tall women—not all—possess. And her smile was very winning, though slightly sad, as if fate had meant her to be a bright-natured woman, but had changed its mind, and left her so long without happiness that she had at last learnt to do without it. In this, as in most other things—external as well as internal—she was utterly unlike her sister Rosa. A certain family tone in their voices was the only resemblance that was likely in any way to give the widower pain.

It was strange to write to him,—“My dear brother,”—she who never had a brother—but she thought she ought to do it, and so she did it; trying hard to feel as an affectionate sister should towards a sorely-afflicted brother, unto whom she was bound to show every possible tenderness. Yet it was difficult, for she was a reserved woman, who took a long time to know anybody.

“And I really know almost nothing of him,” she thought. “No blood relationship,—no tie of old association; and yet one is expected to treat a strange man as one’s brother, just because one’s sister has gone through the marriage ceremony with him. If I had seen more of Mr. Rivers,—if I had lived actually in the house with him—— But, no; that would not have done it; nothing would have produced what did not really exist. I can only hope the right sisterly feeling will come in time, and I must get on as well as I can till it does come.”

So she pondered, and wrote a letter; short, indeed, but as affectionate as she could conscientiously make it; suggesting plainly that one of his own sisters would be a much better house-keeper for him than herself; but that, if he really wished for her, she would come. And she signed herself, after a considerable struggle,—for the word, which she had thought she should never say or write more, cost her a gush of tears,—“Your faithful sister, Hannah Thelluson.”

It was fully one in the morning before the letter was done, and she had to be up at six, as usual. But she slept between whiles soundly, not perplexing herself about the future. Hers was an essentially peaceful nature when she had done a thing, and done it for the best,

she usually let it alone, and did not "worry" about it any more. That weak, restless disposition, which, the moment a thing is done begins to wish it undone, was happily not hers. It had been Rosa's, even in the midst of her bright, pleasant, loved and loving life; which, perhaps, accounted for the elder sister's habits being markedly the contrary.

Yet, when her mind was made up, and she put her letter into the post-bag, it was not without a certain doubt, almost a fear, whether she had done rightly—no, rightly she had little doubt of,—but wisely, as regarded herself. Then came her usual consolatory thought—"It can only harm myself." Still she felt it was a serious change, and many times during the day her thoughts wandered painfully from her duties in the school-room to her brother-in-law and his child.

Nobody noticed her preoccupation, for it was one of the essential and familiar facts of the governess's life that she might be sick or sorry, troubled or glad, without anybody's observing it. Not that she ever met with the least unkindness, indeed her position in this family was a very happy one; she had everything her own way, and was treated by the countess with that stately consideration which so perfectly well-bred a woman could not fail to show to the meanest member of her household. But, necessarily, Miss Thelluson's life was one of complete isolation; so that but for her pupils, their naughtinesses and goodnesses, she would have ceased to recognise herself as one of the great human brotherhood, and felt like a solitary nomad, of no use and no pleasure to anybody. A sensation which, morbid and foolish as it may be, is not rare to women who are neither old nor young—who, on the verge of middle age, find themselves without kith or kin, husband or child, and are forced continually to remember that the kindest of friends love them only with a tender benevolence, as adjuncts, but not essentials, of happiness. They are useful to many—necessary to none; and the sooner they recognise this, the better.

As Miss Thelluson kissed the little Ladies Dacre in their beds—where, somewhat in defiance of the grand nurse, she insisted upon going to them every night—the thought of that helpless baby, her own baby—for was not Rosa's child her very flesh and blood?—came across her in a flash of sunshiny delight, that warmed her heart through and through. She began to plan and to dream, until at the end of that solitary evening walk through the park, which she seldom missed,—it was sad and soothing after the cares of the day,—she began to fancy she had not half appreciated Mr. Rivers's proposal, or responded to it half warmly enough; and to fear, with an almost ridiculous apprehension, that he might change his mind, or that something might happen to prevent the scheme from being carried out. And she waited with a nervous anxiety, for which she laughed at her-

self, the return post by which she had requested him to write his final decision.

It came in six lines :—

“I shall expect you, as soon as you can make it practicable. You will be like her lost mother to my poor little girl ; and, as for me, my wife’s sister shall be to me exactly as my own.”

Hannah wondered a little how much his own sisters were to him ; whether it was the close, affectionate bond—so free yet so strong—which had always been her unknown ideal of fraternal love, or the careless tie, less of sympathy than of habit and familiarity, such as she often saw it in the world—for she had seen a good deal of the world, more or less, since she had been a governess. Also, just a little, she wondered whether, with the best intentions, it was possible to create an artificial bond where the real one did not exist, and how soon she should learn to feel at ease with Mr. Rivers, as much as if he had been her born brother.

But these speculations were idle ; time would decide all things. Her only present thought need be that the die was cast ; there was no drawing back now. She had, as speedily as possible, to arrange her own affairs ; and first to give “warning”—as servants say—to Lady Dunsmore.

This was not exactly a pleasant task, for the countess and her governess had always got on together remarkably well : the one lady recognising calmly, and without either false pride or false shame, that though a lady, she was also a governess—a paid servant, discharging her duties like the rest ; the other lady receiving and appreciating those services as a lady should. Therefore, nothing was lost, and much gained on both sides. Miss Thelluson had been two years in the family, and it seemed tacitly understood that she was to remain until the young ladies’ education was finished. Thus suddenly to desert her post looked almost like ingratitude—a vice abhorrent in all shapes to Hannah Thelluson.

It was with a hesitating step, and a heart beating much faster than its wont—this poor heart, strangely stilled down now from its youthful impulsiveness—that she knocked at the door of the morning-room where her pupils’ mother, young and beautiful, happy and beloved, spent the forenoon in the elegant employments that she called duties, and which befitted her lot in life—a lot as different from that of her governess as it is possible to conceive. The two women were wide apart as the poles—in character, circumstances, destiny : yet both being good women, they had a respect, and even liking, for one another. Hannah admired the countess excessively, and Lady Dunsmore always had for her governess a smile as pleasant as that she bestowed on the best “society.”

“Good-morning, Miss Thelluson ! Pray sit down. I hope nothing is amiss in the school-room ? Mary seems working more diligently of

late. Georgy and Blanche are not more troublesome to you than usual?"

"Indeed, I have no fault to find with either Lady Blanche or Lady Georgina, and Lady Mary is as good a girl as she can be," returned Hannah warmly, half amused at herself for noticing what a week ago she would have accepted as too natural a fact to be observed at all,—that it never occurred to her pupils' mamma to suppose she could have any interest beyond Lady Mary, Lady Georgina, and Lady Blanche. That their governess should have a separate existence of her own, or any personal affairs to communicate, seemed quite impossible. "Have you ten minutes to throw away, Lady Dunsmore?" continued she. "May I have a word with you about myself and my own concerns?"

"Certainly; nothing could give me greater pleasure;" and then with that sweet, courteous grace she had—it might be only outside good-breeding, and yet, as it never failed her, and all outside things do fail sometimes, I think it must rather have been from her kindly heart—the countess settled herself to listen. But first she cast a slight sidelong glance of observation and inquiry. Was it possible that Miss Thelluson was going to be married?

But no love-story was indicated by the grave, quiet, dignified manner of the governess.

"You are aware, I think," she said, "that my only sister died six months ago."

"Ah, I was so sorry to hear it! Was she married?"

"Yes."

"Of course! I remember now. She died at her confinement, and the dear little baby also?"

"No," returned Hannah shortly, and then was vexed at herself for being so foolishly sensitive. What possible impression could Rosa's sad story have made, beyond the passing moment, on this beautiful and brilliant woman, whose interests were so wide, who had such myriads of acquaintances and friends? To expect from her more than mere kindness, the polite kindness which her manner showed, as, evidently annoyed at her own mistake, she cudgelled her memory to recall the circumstances, was exacting from Lady Dunsmore too much, more than human nature was capable of. Hannah recognised this, and saved herself and the countess by plunging at once in *medias res*. "No; the baby happily did not die. It is alive still, and my brother-in-law wishes me to come and take charge of it, and of his household."

"Permanently?"

"I hope so."

"Then you come to tell me that you wish to relinquish your position here. Oh, Miss Thelluson, I am so sorry! At the commencement of the season, too. How shall I ever find time to get a new governess?"

The countess's regret was unmistakable, though it took the personal tone which perhaps was not unnatural in one for whom the wheels of life had always turned so smoothly, that when there was the least jar she looked quite surprised.

"I am very sorry, too, on many accounts," said Miss Thelluson. "I love my pupils dearly. I should like to have remained until they grew up, to have dressed Lady Mary for her first drawing-room, as she always said I must, and watched how people admired Lady Blanche's beauty and Lady Georgina's magnificent voice. They are three dear little girls," continued the governess, not unmoved, for she loved and was proud of her pupils. "My heart is sore to leave them. But this baby, my poor little niece, is my own flesh and blood."

"Of course! Pray do not imagine I blame you, or think you have used me ill," said the countess gently. "You are only doing what is natural under the circumstances, and I shall easily replace you—I mean I shall easily find another governess; it will be more difficult to get a second Miss Thelluson."

Miss Thelluson acknowledged, but did not attempt to deny, the delicate compliment. She knew she had done her duty, and that under many difficulties—far more than the countess suspected. For hapless countesses, who are the centre of brilliant societies, have only too few hours to spend in their nurseries and school-rooms; and these three little ladies owed much, more than their mother guessed, to their governess. It had sometimes been a comfort to Miss Thelluson in her dull life to hope that the seed she sowed might spring up again years hence in the hearts of these young aristocrats, who would have so much in their power for good or for evil. She had tried her best to make them really "noble" women, and it was pleasant to have her labour appreciated.

"And how soon do you wish to go?" asked Lady Dunsmore, rather lugubriously, for she had had endless changes of governesses before Miss Thelluson's time, and she foresaw the same thing over again—or worse.

"Do not say I 'wish' to go. But my brother-in-law requires me much, he says, and would like to have me as soon as you could spare me. Not a day sooner, though, than you find convenient. I could not bear that. You have been so kind; I have been so happy here."

"As I trust you will be everywhere," replied Lady Dunsmore cordially. "Your brother's home—I forget exactly where it is."

"Easterham. He is the Reverend Bernard Rivers, the vicar there."

"Son to Sir Austin Rivers, of Easterham Moat-House, who married one of the Protheroes?"

"I really don't know Lady Rivers's antecedents—I never can remember pedigrees," replied Hannah, smiling. "But his father is certainly Sir Austin, and they live at the Moat-House."

"Then I know all about them. Why did you not tell me before? I must have met your brother-in-law. He is the eldest—no, I am forgetting again—the second son, but takes the place of the eldest, who is of weak intellect, is he not?"

"I believe so, unfortunately. He has epileptic fits."

"And is not likely to marry. All the better for the clergyman. I am sure I have seen him—a tall, bearded, handsome young man."

"Rosa used to think him handsome. As to his youth, I fancy he was about five years her senior. That would make him just my age; but men are quite young still at thirty."

"Women, too, I hope," said the countess, smiling with a pleasant consciousness that if Debrett had not betrayed it, no one would ever have imagined that she was herself fully that age. Then, as if struck with a sudden thought, she eyed Miss Thelluson keenly—one of those acute, penetrating looks of hers, a mixture of the shrewd woman of the world with the single-minded, warm-hearted woman that she undoubtedly was, also.

"I am going to take a great liberty with you, Miss Thelluson," she continued after a pause; "but I am a candid person—may I say a few candid words?"

"Certainly. And I should thank you for saying them."

"Well, then, you are still a young woman."

"Oh, no; not young."

The countess put out her pretty hand with imperative gesture, and repeated—

"Yes; a young unmarried woman, and I am a matron and a mother. May I ask, have you well considered in every point of view the step you are about to take?"

"I think I have. That there are many difficulties, I know; and I am prepared for them."

"What sort of difficulties?"

Hannah hesitated; but the frank, kind eyes seemed to compel an answer. She was so unused to sympathy that when it did come she could not resist it—

"First—I know I may speak confidentially, Lady Dunsmore—first, there is the Moat-House. The Rivers family did not quite like my poor Rosa; at least, they wished their son to have married higher. They may not like me either, and they may naturally feel offended at his choosing his wife's sister to live with him, instead of one of his own."

"He had better have chosen one of his own."

"I think so too, and I told him this; but he makes no answer, and, therefore, I conclude he has good reasons for not wishing it, and for wishing me instead. Then I shall hold a most responsible position in his household, have much parish work to do, as much as if I were the clergyman's wife."

"He should take a wife as soon as he can."

Hannah winced a moment. "It is only six months since her death ; and yet—and yet—Yes ! I feel with you that the sooner he takes a wife the better ; his need of help, he tells me, is very great ; but in the meantime I must help him all I can."

"I am sure you will ; you are made to help people," said the countess cordially. "But none of these are the difficulties I was foreseeing."

"About my poor little niece perhaps ? You think an old maid cannot bring up a baby, or manage a house, with a man at the head of it—men being so peculiar ? But Rosa always said her husband was the sweetest temper in the world."

"He looked so. Not gifted with over-much strength, either mentally or bodily ; but of a wonderfully amiable and affectionate nature. At least, so he struck me in the few times I saw him. I only wish I had seen more of him, that I now might judge better."

"On my account ?" said Hannah, half-amused, half-pleased at the unexpected kindness.

The countess took her hand. "Will you forgive me ? Will you believe that I speak purely out of my interest in you, and my conviction that though you may be a much better woman than I, I am a wiser woman than you—at least, in worldly wisdom. Are you aware, my dear Miss Thelluson, that this is the only country in the world in which a lady of your age and position could take the step you are contemplating ?"

"Why not ?—what possible reason——"

"I am sorry I have put the idea into your head, since it evidently has never come there. No ! I am not sorry. Whatever you do ought to be done with your eyes open. Has it never occurred to you that your brother-in-law is really no brother, no blood relation at all to you ; and that in every country, except England, a man may marry his wife's sister ?"

Hannah drew back ; a faint colour rose in her cheek ; but it soon died out. The idea of her marrying anybody seemed so supremely, ridiculously impossible—of her marrying Rosa's husband painfully so.

"It certainly did not occur to me," she answered gently, "and if it had, it would have made no difference in my decision. Such marriages being unlawful here, of course he is simply my brother, and nothing more."

"He is not your brother," persisted Lady Dunsmore. "No force of law can make him so, or make you feel as if he were. And, I assure you, I who have gone about the world much more than you have, that I have seen many sad instances in which——"

But the expression of distress, and even repulsion, on the governess's face made the other lady pause.

"Well, well," she said; "you must have thought the matter well over, and it is, after all, purely your own affair."

"It is my own affair," replied Hannah, still gently, but in a way that would have closed the subject, had not the countess, with her infinite tact and good breeding, dismissed it at once herself, and begun consulting with Miss Thelluson on the best way of replacing her, and the quickest, that she might the sooner be free "to go to that poor little baby."

"And remember," she added, "that on this point you need have no qualms. My old nurse used to say that any sensible woman, with a heart in her bosom, could manage a baby."

Hannah smiled, and her happy feeling returned, so that she was able to listen with interest, and even amusement, to a vivid description which the clever countess gave of baby's grandmother and aunts, whom she had met in London that season.

"All Easterham is *terra incognita* to me, Lady Dunsmore; but I shall try not to be afraid of anything or anybody, and to do my best, whatever happens—a very commonplace sentiment; but, you see, I was always a commonplace person," added Hannah, smiling.

"In which case you would never have found it out," replied the countess, who had hitherto had few opportunities of any long talk with her governess, on other topics than the children. Now, having both an aptitude and a love for the study of character, she found herself interested unawares in that grave, still, refined-looking woman, who, though perhaps, as she said, a little commonplace when in repose, was, when she talked, capable of so much and such varied expression, both of feature and gesture—for there is a language of motion quite as plain as the language of form, and of the two perhaps it is the most attractive.

She said to herself, this brilliant little lady, who had seen so much of life—of aristocratic life especially, and of the terrible human passions that seethe and boil under the smooth surface of elegant idleness—she said to herself, "That face has a story in it."

Yes, Miss Thelluson had had her story, early told and quickly ended; but it had coloured her whole life, for all that.

She had no brothers; but she had an orphan cousin, of whom she was very fond. As childish playfellows, the two always said they would marry one another, which everybody laughed at as an excellent joke, until it grew into earnest. Then Hannah's father, an eminent physician, interfered. There was consumption in the family, and the young man had already shown ominous symptoms of it. His marrying anybody was unwise; his marrying a first cousin absolute insanity. Dr. Thelluson, much as he blamed himself for allowing the young people every chance of falling in love, when it was most imprudent for them to marry, was yet too good a man frantically to shut

the stable-door after the steed was stolen, and to overstrain parental authority to cruelty. He did not forbid the marriage, but he remonstrated against it, both as a father and a physician, in the strongest manner, and worked so much upon Hannah's feelings, that she consented to be separated entirely from her cousin for three years, until she came of age. Her reason told her that was no unfair test of so youthful an attachment. Her father's secret hope was that the test might fail, the affection wear away, and the union which, though sanctioned by law and custom, he believed nature totally disapproved of, might never come about.

It never did. Long before the three years were ended, young Thelluson died at Madeira of the family disease. Hannah restored her betrothal ring to her finger, saying calmly, "I am married now," and seemed to bear her sorrow quietly enough at first. But the quietness grew into a stupor of despair, ending in that state of mind almost akin to madness, in which one dwells hopelessly and agonizingly upon what might have been; for some people were cruel enough to hint that a wife's care might have lengthened her lover's life, and that his grief for Hannah's loss accelerated his fatal disease. Many a time when her father looked at her he almost wished he had let the hapless cousins marry—running all risks for themselves or their possible children. But all his life the physician had held the doctrine that hereditary taint, physical or moral, constitutes a stronger hindrance to marriage than any social bar. He had acted according to his faith, and he was not shaken from it because he had so keenly suffered for it.

After a time Hannah's sorrow wore itself out, or was blotted out by others following—her father's death, and the dispersion of the family. There was no mother living; but there were three sisters at first, then two, then only one,—her quiet, solitary self. For her great grief had left upon her an ineffaceable impression—not exactly of melancholy, but of exceeding quietness and settled loneliness of heart. She said to herself, "I never can suffer more than I have suffered;" and thenceforward all vicissitudes of fate became level to her—at least, she thought so then.

Such was her story. It had never been very public, and nobody ever talked of it or knew it now. Lady Dunsmore had not the least idea of it, or she would not have ended their conversation as she did.

"Good-bye now, and remember you have my best wishes—ay, even if you marry your brother-in-law. It is not nearly so bad as marrying your cousin. But I beg your pardon; my tongue runs away with me. All I mean to say, seriously, is that, my husband being one of those who uphold the bill for legalising such marriages, I am well up on the subject, and we both earnestly hope they will be legalised in time."

"Whether or not, it cannot concern me," said Miss Thelluson gently.

"The remedying of a wrong concerns everybody a little—at least I think so. How society can forbid a man's marrying his wife's sister, who is no blood relation at all, and yet allow him to marry his cousin—a proceeding generally unwise, and sometimes absolutely wicked—I cannot imagine. But forgive me again; I speak earnestly, for I feel earnestly."

"I am sure of it," said Miss Thelluson.

She was a little paler than usual; but that was all; and when she had parted, quite affectionately, from her pupils' mother, she went and sat in her own little room as quiet as ever, except that she once or twice turned round on her third finger its familiar ring, the great red carbuncle, like a drop of blood, which had belonged to her cousin Arthur.

"What a fancy of the countess's, to call me 'young,' and suggest my marrying!" thought she, with a faint, sad smile. "No, I shall never marry anybody; and therefore it is kind of Heaven thus to make a home for me, and, above all, to send me a child. A child of my very own almost; for she will never remember any mother but me. How I wish she might call me mother! However, that would not do, perhaps. I must be content with 'auntie.' But I shall have her all to myself, nevertheless, and perhaps Mr. Rivers may marry again, and then I would ask him to give her up wholly to me. Only to think, me with a child!—a little thing trotting after me and laughing in my face—a big girl growing up beside me, a grown-up daughter to comfort my old age—oh, what a happy woman I should be!"

So pondered she—this lonely governess, this "old maid," whose love-dreams were long ago vanished; and began unawares to let the fact slip behind her and look forward to the future; to build and freight with new hopes that tiny ship—she that had never thought to put to sea again—to set her empty heart, with all its capacity of loving, upon what? A baby six months old!

CHAPTER II.

A HOUSE on a hill. It has its advantages, and its disadvantages. It is hard to climb to, and harder to descend from. Everywhere round about you may see from it; but then everybody round about can see you. It is like the city set on a hill, it cannot be hid. Its light shines far: but then the blacker is its darkness. However, one need not carry out the metaphor, which speaks for itself.

Hannah Thelluson's ideal of a house had always been a house on

a hill. She had a curious dislike to living, either physically or morally, upon low ground. She wanted plenty of breathing-room: space around her and over her: freedom to look abroad on the earth and up to the sky. And, though her nature was neither ambitious nor overbearing, she experienced even yet a childish delight in getting to the top of things, in surmounting and looking down upon difficulties, and in feeling that there was nothing beyond her,—nothing unconquered between herself and the sky. At least, that is the nearest description of a sentiment that was quite indescribable, and yet as real as intangible fancies often are.

Therefore it had given her a certain sensation of pleasure to hear that Mr. Rivers had removed from his house in the village, the associations of which he found it impossible to bear, to another, on the top of Easterham Hill, or Down, as it was generally called, being a high open space, breezy and bright. On it he was building a few cottages—a cottage convalescent hospital he meant it to be—in memory of his late wife.

"I had planned a marble monument," he wrote to Hannah, "a recumbent figure of herself, life-size, with two angels watching at head and foot. But I found this would cost nearly as much as the cottage, and it struck me that Rosa would have liked something that was not only a memorial of the dead, but a blessing to the living."

Hannah agreed with him, and that little circumstance gave her a favourable impression of her brother-in-law. She was also touched by the minute arrangements he made for her journey, a rather long one, and her reception at its end. Some of his plans failed—he was not able to meet her himself, being sent for suddenly to the Moat-House—but the thoughtful kindness remained, and Miss Thelluson was grateful.

She wound slowly up the hill in her brother-in-law's comfortable carriage, and descended at his door, the door of a much grander house than she expected—till she remembered that since Rosa's death Mr. Rivers's income had been doubled by succeeding to the fortune of a maternal uncle. With him, wealth accumulated upon wealth, as it seems to do with some people; perhaps, alas! as a balance-weight against happiness.

Miss Thelluson asked herself this question, in a sad kind of way, when she entered the handsome modern house—very modern it seemed to her, who had been living in old castles these three years, and very luxurious too. She wondered much whether she should feel at home here; able to be happy herself, or make the widower happy—the forlorn man, who had every blessing in life except the crowning one of all, a good wife: the "gift that cometh from the Lord." Was this worse or better for him? He had had it, and it had been taken away. Hannah thought, with a compassion for the living that almost lessened her grief for the dead, how deso-

late he must often feel, sitting down to his solitary meals, wandering through his empty garden—Rosa had so loved a garden—and back again to his silent room. How he must miss his wife at every step, in everything about him. A loss sharper even than that one—the sharpness of which she knew so well. But then, she and Arthur had never been married.

"I must try and help him as much as I can—my poor brother-in-law!" thought she to herself as she came into the dreary house; all the more dreary because it was such a handsome house; and then she thought no more either of it or its master. For did it not contain what was infinitely more interesting to her—the baby?

Some people will smile at what I am going to say: and yet it is truth,—a truth always solemn, sometimes rather sad likewise. There are women in whom mother-love is less an instinct or an affection than an actual passion—as strong as, sometimes even stronger than, the passion of love itself; to whom the mere thought of little hands and little feet—especially "*my little hands, my little feet*," in that fond appropriation with which one poet-mother puts it—gives a thrill of ecstasy as keen as any love-dreams. This, whether or not they have children of their own; often, poor women! when they are lonely old maids. And such an one was Hannah Thelluson.

As she entered the house (I feel the confession is more pathetic than ridiculous) she actually trembled with the delight of thinking that in a minute more she would have her little niece in her arms; and her first question was, "Where is the baby?"

Apparently a question quite unexpected from any visitor in this house; for the footman, much surprised, passed it to the butler, and the butler circulated it somewhere in the inferior regions: whence presently there appeared a slatternly female servant.

"I am Miss Thelluson, baby's aunt. I want to see my little niece."

Upon this the slatternly girl led the way up a steep stair to the nursery. It was a long, low, gloomy room, which struck chilly on entering, even in full summer, for its only window looked north-east, and was shaded by an over-hanging tree. It had in perfection the close nursery atmosphere of the old school, whose chiefest horror seemed to be fresh air. Sunless, smothery, dull, and cold, it was the last place in the world for any young life to grow up in. It cast a weight even upon the grown woman, who loved light and air, and would never, either physically or mentally, willingly walk in gloom.

Miss Thelluson contemplated sadly that small pale effigy of a child, which lay in the little crib, with the last evening light slanting across it through a carelessly-drawn curtain. It lay, not in the lovely attitudes that sleeping children often assume, but flat upon its back, its arms stretched out cruciform, and its tiny feet extended straight out, almost like a dead child. There was

neither roundness nor colouring in the face, and very little beauty. Only a certain pathetic peace, not unlike the peace of death.

"Don't touch her," whispered Miss Thelluson, as the nurse was proceeding roughly to take up her charge. "Never disturb a sleeping child. I will wait till to-morrow."

And she stood and looked at it—this sole relic of poor Rosa ; this tiny creature, which was all that was left of the Thelluson race, notable and honourable in its day, though long dwindled down into poverty and obscurity.

As she looked, there came into Hannah's heart that something—mothers say they feel it at the instant when God makes them living mothers of a living babe ; and perhaps He puts it into the hearts of other women, not mothers at all, in solemn, exceptional cases, and for holy ends—that passionate instinct of protection, tenderness, patience, self-denial ; of giving everything and expecting nothing back, which constitutes the true ideal of maternity. She did not lift the child ; she would not allow herself even to kiss its little curled-up fingers, for fear of waking it, but she consecrated herself to it from that moment,—as only women and mothers can, and do.

Nurse, who disliked her authority being set aside, approached again. "Never mind touching it, miss ; we often do. It only cries a bit, and goes off to sleep again."

But Hannah held her arm. "No, no !" she said, rather sharply ; "I will not have the child disturbed. I can wait. It is *my* child."

And she sat down on the rocking-chair by the crib-side with the air of one who knew her own rights, and was determined to have them. All her nervous doubt of herself, her hesitation and timidity, vanished together ; the sight before her seemed to make her strong ;—strong as the weakest creatures are when the maternal instinct comes into them. At the moment, and for ever henceforth, Hannah felt that she could have fought like any wild beast for the sake of that little helpless babe.

She sat a long while beside it ; long enough to take in pretty clearly the aspect of things around her. Though she was an old maid, or considered herself so, she had had a good deal of experience of family life in the various nurseries of friends and employers ; upon which her strong common sense and quick observation had made many internal comments. She detected at once here that mournful lack of the mother's eye and hand ; the mother's care and delight in making all things orderly and beautiful for the opening intelligence of her darling. It was quite enough to look around the room to feel sure that the little sleeper before her was nobody's darling. Cared for, of course, up to a certain extent, in a stupid, mechanical way ; but there was nobody to take up, with full heart, the burthen of motherhood, and do the utmost for the little human

being who, physiologists say, bears in body and soul, the impress of its first two years of life with it to the grave.

"And this duty falls to me; God has given it to me," said Hannah Thelluson to herself. And without a moment's questioning, or considering how far the labour might outweigh the reward, or indeed whether the reward would ever come at all, she added solemnly, "Thank God!"

"I shall be here again before bed-time," said she aloud to the nurse as she rose.

"You can't, miss," returned the woman, evidently bent on resistance; "I always goes to bed early, and I locks my nursery-door after I've gone to bed."

"That will not do," said Miss Thelluson. "I am baby's aunt, as you know, and her father has given her into my charge. The nursery must never be locked against me, day or night. Where is the key?" She took it out of the door and put it into her pocket, the nurse looking too utterly astonished to say a word. "I shall be back here again punctually at half-past nine."

"My first battle!" she thought, sighing, as she went away to her own room. She was not fond of battles; still, she could fight—when there was something worth fighting for; and even her first half-hour in the widower's household was sufficient to show her that the mistress of it would require to have eyes like Argus, and a heart as firm as a rock. This was natural; like everything else, quite natural: but it was not the less hard, and it did not make her home-coming to the house on the hill more cheerful.

It was a new house comparatively, and everything about it was new. Nothing could be more different from the old-fashioned stateliness in which she had lived at Lord Dunsmore's. But then there she was a stranger; this was home. She glanced through the house in passing, and tried to admire it, for it was her brother-in-law's own property, only lately bought. Not that he liked it—he had told her mournfully that he neither liked nor disliked anything much now—but it was the most suitable house he could find.

She went out into the garden, and wept out a heartfelt of tears in the last gleam of the twilight, then she came back and dressed for the seven o'clock dinner, for which the maid—who appeared at the door, saying she had been specially ordered to attend on Miss Thelluson—told her Mr. Rivers was sure to return.

"The first time master ever has returned, miss, to a regular late dinner, since the poor mistress died."

This, too, was a trial. As Hannah descended, attired with her usual neatness, but in the thorough middle-aged costume that she had already assumed, there flashed across her a vision of poor Rosa, the last time, though they little knew it was the last, that she ran into her sister's room just before dinner; all in white, her round rosy arms and neck

gleaming under the thin muslin, so happy herself, and brightening all around her with her loving, lovable ways. And now, a mile distant, Rosa slept under the daisies. How did her husband endure the thought!

With one great sob Hannah smothered down these remembrances. They would make the approaching meeting more than painful—intolerable. She felt as if the first minute she looked into her brother-in-law's face and grasped his hand, both would assuredly break down, although over both had grown the outside composure of a six-months' old sorrow.

He himself seemed in dread of a "scene," and watchful to avoid it, for instead of meeting her in the drawing-room, she found him waiting for her at the stair-foot, under the safe shelter of all the servants' eyes.

"I am late," he said; "I must apologise."

Then they shook hands. Mr. Rivers's hand was trembling, and very cold, but that was all. He said nothing more, and led her at once into the dining-room.

In such circumstances, how dreadful sometimes are little things—the little things that unconsciously crop up, stinging like poisoned arrows. There was one—Hannah recalled it long afterwards, and so did others—dwelling malignly upon the innocent, publicly-uttered, kindly words.

The table had been laid for two persons, master and mistress, and the butler held for Miss Thelluson the mistress's chair. Struck with a sudden pang, she hesitated—glanced towards Mr. Rivers.

"Take it," he said, in a smothered kind of voice; "it is your place now. I hope you will keep it always."

So she sat down, in Rosa's seat; with Rosa's husband opposite. How terrible for him to see another face in the room of that dear, lovely one, over which the coffin-lid had closed! It was her duty, and she went through it; but she felt all dinner-time as if sitting upon thorns.

During the safe formalities of the meal, she had leisure to take some observation of her brother-in-law. He was greatly altered. There had passed over him that great blow—the first grief of a life-time; and it had struck him down as a man of naturally buoyant temperament usually is struck by any severe shock—sinking under it utterly. Even as sometimes those² whom in full health disease has smitten, die quicker than those who have been long inured to sickness and suffering.

His sister-in-law observed him compassionately but sharply; more sharply than she had ever done before. The marriage having been all settled without her, she had not to criticise but to accept him as Rosa's choice, and had actually only seen him twice—on the wedding-day, and the one brief visit afterwards. She had noticed him little, until now. But now, when they were to live together

as brother and sister; when he expected her to be his friend and companion, daily and hourly; to soothe him and sympathise with him, put up with all his moods and humours, consult him on all domestic matters, and, in short, stand to him in the closest relation that any woman can stand to any man, unless she is his mother or his wife, the case was altered. It behoved her to find out, as speedily as possible, what sort of man Mr. Rivers was.

He had a handsome face, and yet—this “yet” is not so unfair as it seems—it was likewise a good face; full of feeling and expression. A little feminine, perhaps—he was like his mother, the first Lady Rivers, who had been a very beautiful woman; and once Hannah had thought it boyishly bright—too bright to interest her much, but it was not so now. The sunshine had all gone out of it, yet it had not attained the composed dignity of grief. Irritable, restless, gloomy, morbid, he seemed in that condition into which a naturally good-tempered man is prone to fall, when some great shock has upset his balance, and made him the exact opposite of what he once was—hating everything and everybody about him, and himself most of all.

Hannah sighed as she listened, though trying not to listen, to his fault-finding with the servants, sometimes *sotto voce*, sometimes barely restrained by his lingering sense of right from breaking out into actual anger—he who was, Rosa used to assert, the sweetest-tempered man, the most perfect gentleman, in all the world. Yet even his crossness was pathetic—like the naughtiness of a sick child, who does not know what is the matter with him. Hannah felt so sorry for him! She longed to make excuse for those domestic delinquencies, and tell him she would soon put all right; as she knew she could, having been her father’s housekeeper ever since she was a girl of sixteen.

She was bold enough faintly to hint this, when they got into the drawing-room, where some trivial neglect had annoyed him excessively, much more than it deserved; and she offered to rectify it.

“Will you really? Will you take all these common household cares upon yourself?”

“It is a woman’s business; and I like it.”

“So *she* used to say. She used constantly to be longing for you, and telling me how comfortable everything was when her sister was housekeeper at home. She—she——”

It was the first time the desolate man had ventured off the safe track of common-place conversation, and though he only spoke of Rosa as “she,”—it seemed impossible to him to call her by her name—the mere reference to his dead wife was more than he could bear. All the flood-gates of his grief burst open.

“Isn’t this a change!—a terrible, terrible change!” he cried, looking up to Hannah with anguish in his eyes. A child’s anguish could

not have been more appealing, more utterly undisguised. And, sitting down, he covered his face with his hands, and wept—also like a child.

Hannah wept too, but not with such a passionate abandonment; it was against her nature, woman though she was. Her own long-past sorrow, which, she fancied, most resembled his, and had first drawn her to him with a strange sympathy, had been a grief totally silent. From the day of Arthur's death she never mentioned her cousin's name. Consolation she had never asked or received from any human being—this sort of affliction could not be comforted. Therefore she scarcely understood, at first, how Bernard Rivers, when the seal was once broken, poured out the whole story of his loss in a continuous stream. For an hour or more he sat beside her, talking of Rosa's illness and death, and all he had suffered; then going over and over again, with a morbid intensity, his brief, happy married life; apparently finding in this overflow of heart the utmost relief, and even alleviation.

Hannah listened, somewhat surprised, but still she listened. The man and the woman were as unlike as they well could be; yet, thus thrown together—bound together, as it were by the link of a common grief, their very dissimilarity, and the necessity it involved of each making allowances for, and striving heartily not to misjudge the other, produced a certain mutual interest, which made even their first sad evening not quite so sad as it might have been.

After a while, Hannah tried to lure Mr. Rivers out of his absorbing and pitifully self-absorbed grief into a few practical matters; for she was anxious to get as clear an idea as she could of her own duties in the household and the parish: her duties only; her position, and her rights—if she had any—would, she knew, fall into their fitting places by-and-by.

"Yes, I have a large income," said Mr. Rivers, sighing; "far too large for me and that poor little baby. She would have enjoyed it, and spent it wisely and well. You shall spend it instead. You shall have as much money as you want, weekly or monthly; just as she had. Oh, how clever she was! how she used to bring me her books to reckon over, and make such fun out of them, and fall into such pretty despair if they were the least bit wrong. My own Rosa! My merry, happy wife!—yes, I know I made her happy! She told me so,—almost her last words."

"Thank God for that!"

"I do."

Hannah tried to put into the heart-stricken man the belief—essentially a woman's—that a perfect love, even when lost, is still an eternal possession—a pain so sacred that its deep peace often grows into absolute content. But he did not seem to understand this at all. His present loss—the continually aching want—the daily

craving for love and help and sympathy—these were all he felt, and felt with a keenness indescribable. How could the one ever be filled up and the other supplied?

Hannah could not tell. She grew frightened at the responsibility she had undertaken. A kind of hopelessness came over her; she almost wished herself safe back again in the quiet school-room with her little Ladies Dacre. There, at least, she knew all her duties, and could fulfil them; here they already seemed so complicated that how she should first get them clear, and then perform them, was more than she knew. However, it was not her way to meet evils beforehand, or to try and put more than the day's work into the day. She was old enough to have ceased to struggle after the impossible.

So she sat watching, with a pity almost motherly, the desolate man, with whom, it seemed, for a time, at least, her lot was cast; inwardly praying that she might have strength to do her duty by him, and secretly hoping that it might not be for long, that his grief, by its very wildness, might wear itself out, and the second marriage, which Lady Dunsmore had prognosticated as the best thing which could happen to him, might gradually come about.

"Rosa would have wished it—even Rosa," the sister thought, choking down a not unnatural pang, "could she see him as I see him now."

It was a relief to catch an excuse for a few minutes' absence;—she took out her watch, and told her brother-in-law it was time to go up to the nursery.

"Nurse does not like it—I see that; but still I must go. Every night before I sleep I must take my latest peep at baby."

"Ah, that reminds me—I have never asked you what you think of baby. I don't know how it is—I fear you will think me very wicked," added the widower, sighing, "but I cannot take the interest I ought to take in that poor child. I suppose men don't care for babies—not at first—and then her birth cost me so much!"

"It was God's will things should be thus," answered Hannah gravely. "It should not make you dislike your child—Rosa's child."

"God forbid!—only that I cannot feel as I ought to feel towards the poor little thing."

"You will in time." And Hannah tried to draw a picture such as might touch any father's heart—of his wee girl toddling after him; his big girl taking his hand, and beginning to ask him questions; his sweet, grown-up girl becoming his housekeeper, companion, and friend.

Mr. Rivers only shook his head. "Ah, but that is a long time to wait. I want a friend and companion now. How am I ever to get through these long, lonely years!"

"God will help you," said Hannah solemnly, and then felt half ashamed, remembering she was preaching to a clergyman. But he

was a man, too, with all a man's weaknesses, every one of which she was sure to find out ere long. Even already she had found out a good many. Evidently he was of a warm, impulsive, affectionate nature, sure to lay upon her all his burthens. She would have the usual lot of sisters, to share most of the cares and responsibilities of a wife, without a wife's blessings or a wife's love.

"I must go now. Good-night," she said.

"Good-night? Nay, surely you are coming back to me again? You don't know what a relief it has been to talk to you. You cannot tell how terrible to me are these long, lonely evenings."

A moan, to Hannah incomprehensible. For her solitude had no terror—had never had. In early youth she would sit and dream for hours of the future—a future which never came. Now she had done with dreaming; the present sufficed her—and the past. She liked thinking of her dear ones living, her still dearer ones dead, and found in their peaceful, unseen companionship all she required. Never was there a person less dependent on outward society. And yet when she had it she rather enjoyed it—only she never craved after it, nor was it any necessity of her existence. On such women, who themselves can stand alone, others always come and lean—men especially.

As Miss Thelluson quitted him, Mr. Rivers looked after her with those restless, miserable eyes of his, from which the light of happiness seemed fled for ever.

"Pray come back soon," he said imploringly. "I do so hate my own company."

"Poor man! How sad it would be if we women felt the same!" thought Hannah. And she, who understood, and could endure, not only solitude but sorrow, took some comfort to herself;—a little more, also, in the hope of imparting comfort.

A child asleep! Painters draw it; poets sing about it: yet the root of its mystery remains a mystery still. About it seem to float the secrets of earth and heaven—life and death: whence we come, and whither we go: what God does with and in us, and what He expects us to do for ourselves. It is as if, while we gaze, we could catch drifting past us a few threads of that wonderful web—which, in its entirety, He holds solely in His own hands.

Hannah Thelluson looked on this sleeper of six months old with a feeling of not merely tenderness, but awe. She listened to the soft breathing—which might have to draw its last sigh—who knows? perhaps eighty years hence, when she and all her generation were dead, buried, and forgotten. The solemnity of the charge she had undertaken came upon her tenfold. She stood in the empty nursery, apparently left deserted for hours, for the fire was out, and the candle flickered in its socket. Strange shadows came and went; among them one might almost imagine human shapes—perhaps the dead

mother gliding in to look at her lonely child. Even as in some old ballad about a cruel stepmother—

"The nicht was lang and the bairnies grat,
Their mither she under the mools heard that.

"She washed the tane and buskit her fair,
She kamed and plaited the tither's hair ;"

and then reproached the new wife, saying—the words came vividly back upon Hannah's mind—

"I left ye candles and groff wax-light—
My bairnies sleep i' the mirk o' night.

"I left ye mony braw bolsters blae—
My bairnies ligg i' the bare strae."

A notion pathetic in its very extravagance. To Hannah Thelluson it scarcely seemed wonderful that any mother should rise up from "under the mools," and come thus to the rescue of her children.

"Oh, if this baby's father ever brings home a strange woman to be unkind to her, what shall I do? Anything, I think, however desperate. Rosa, my poor Rosa, you may rest in peace! God do so to me, and more also, as the Bible says, if ever I forsake your child."

While she spoke, half aloud, there was a tap at the door.

"Come in, nurse." But it was not the nurse; it was the father.

"I could not rest. I thought I would come too. They never let me look at baby."

"Look then. Isn't she sweet? See how her little fingers curl round her papa's hand already."

Mr. Rivers bent over the crib—not unmoved. "My poor little girl! Do you think, Aunt Hannah, that she will ever be fond of me?"

"I am sure she will."

"Then I shall be so fond of her."

Hannah smiled at the deduction. It was not her notion of loving—especially of loving a child. She had had enough to do with children to feel keenly the truth that, mostly, one has to give all and expect nothing—at least, for many years. But it was useless to say this, or to put any higher ideal of paternal affection into the young father's head. He was so completely a young man still, she said to herself; and felt almost old enough, and experienced enough, to be his mother.

Nevertheless, Mr. Rivers seemed much affected by the sight of his child, evidently rather a rare occurrence.

"I think she is growing prettier," he said. "Anyhow, she looks very peaceful and sweet. I should like to take her and cuddle her, only she would wake and scream."

"I am afraid she would," said Hannah, smiling. "You had better go away. See, there comes nurse." Who entered, in some-

what indignant astonishment, at finding not only Miss Thelluson, but Mr. Rivers, intruding on her domains. Whereupon the latter, with true masculine cowardice, disappeared at once. But when Aunt Hannah—who accepted gladly the welcome name—rejoined him in the drawing-room, she found him pacing to and fro with agitated steps.

“Come in, sister, my good sister. Tell me you don’t think me such a brute as I have been saying to myself I am. Else why should that woman have thought it so extraordinary—my coming to look at my own child? But I do not mean to be a brute. I am only a miserable man, indifferent to everything in this mortal world. Tell me, shall I ever get out of this wretched state of mind? Shall I ever be able to endure my life again?”

What could Hannah say? or would there be any good in saying it? Can the experience of one heart teach another? or must each find out the lesson for itself? I fear so. Should she—as with the strange want of reticence which men sometimes exhibit much more than we women, he poured forth the anguish of his life—open to him that long hidden and now healed, though never-forgotten, woe of hers? But no! she could not. It was too sacred. All she found possible was gently to lead him back to their old subject of talk—common-place, practical things—the daily interests and duties by which, as a clergyman, he was necessarily surrounded, and out of which he might take some comfort. She was sure he might if he chose; she told him so.

“Oh no,” he said bitterly. “Comfort is vain. I am a broken-down man. I shall never be of any good to anybody! But you will take care of my house and my child. Do just as you fancy. Have everything your own way.”

“In one thing I should like to have at once my own way,” said she, rushing desperately upon a subject which she had been resolving on all the evening. “I want to change rooms with baby.”

“Why? Is not yours comfortable? Those horrid servants of mine! I desired them to give you the pleasantest room in the house.”

“So it is; and for that very reason baby ought to have it. A delicate child like her should live in sunshine, physically and morally, all day long. The nursery only catches the sun for an hour in the day.”

“How can you tell, when you have not been twelve hours in the house?”

She touched the tiny compass which hung at her watch-chain.

“What a capital idea! What a very sensible woman you must be.” And Mr. Rivers smiled—for the first time that evening. Miss Thelluson smiled too.

“What would become of a governess if she were not sensible? Then I may have my way?”

"Of course! Only—what shall I say to grandmamma? She chose the nursery, and was quite content with it."

"Grandmamma is probably one of the old school, to whom light and air were quite unnecessary luxuries—nay, rather annoyances."

"Yet the old school brought up their children to be as healthy as ours."

"Because they were probably stronger than ours: we have to pay for the errors of a prior generation; or else the strong ones only lived, the weakly were killed off pretty fast. But I beg your pardon. You set me on my hobby—a governess's hobby—the bringing-up of the new generation. Besides, you know the proverb about the perfectness of old bachelors' wives and old maids' children."

"You are not like an old maid, and still less like a governess." He meant this for a compliment, but it was not accepted as such.

"Nevertheless, I am both," answered Miss Thelluson gravely. "Nor am I ashamed of it either."

"Certainly not; there is nothing to be ashamed of," said Mr. Rivers, colouring. He could not bear in the smallest degree to hurt people's feelings, and had painfully sensitive feelings of his own. Then came an awkward pause, after which conversation flagged to a considerable degree.

Hannah began to think, what in the wide world should she do if she and her brother-in-law had thus to sit opposite to one another, evening after evening, through the long winter's nights, thrown exclusively upon each other's society, bound to be mutually agreeable, or, at any rate, not disagreeable, yet lacking the freedom that exists between husband and wife, or brother and sister who have grown up together, and been used to one another all their lives. It was a position equally difficult and anomalous. She wished she had known Mr. Rivers more intimately during Rosa's lifetime; yet that would have availed her little, for even that intimacy would necessarily have been limited. A reticent woman never, under any circumstances, cares to be very familiar with another woman's husband, even though he be the husband of her own sister. She may like him sincerely, he may be to her a most true and affectionate friend, but to have his constant exclusive society, day after day and evening after evening, she would either find extremely irksome—or, if she did not—God help her! Even under the most innocent circumstances such an attraction would be a sad—nay, a fatal thing, to both parties. People talk about open jealousies; but the secret heart-burnings that arise from misunderstood, half-misunderstood, or wholly false positions between men and women, are much worse. It is the unuttered sorrows, the unadmitted, and impossible-to-be-avenged wrongs, which cause the sharpest pangs of existence.

Not that Miss Thelluson thought about these things; indeed, she was too much perplexed and bewildered by her new position to think

much about anything beyond the moment, but she felt sufficiently awkward and uncomfortable to make her seize eagerly upon any convenient topic of conversation.

"Are they all well at the Moat-House? I suppose I shall have the pleasure of seeing some of your family to-morrow?"

"If—if you will take the trouble of calling there. I must apologise"—and he looked more apologetic than seemed even necessary—"I believe Lady Rivers ought to call upon you; but she is growing old now. You must make allowances."

His was a tell-tale face. Hannah guessed at once that she would have a difficult part to play between her brother-in-law and his family. But she cared not. She seemed not to care much for anything or anybody now—except that little baby up-stairs.

"One always makes allowances for old people," answered she gently.

"And for young people, too," continued Mr. Rivers, with some anxiety. "My sisters are so gay—so careless-hearted—thoughtless, if you will."

Hannah smiled. "I think I shall have too busy a life to be likely to see much of your sisters. And, I promise you, I will, as you say, 'make allowances'—except in one thing." And there came a sudden flash into the deep-set grey eyes, which made Mr. Rivers start, and doubt if his sister-in-law was such a very quiet woman after all. "They must not interfere with me in my bringing-up of my sister's child. There, I fear, they might find me a little—difficult."

"No; you will have no difficulty there," said he hastily. "In truth, my people live too much a life of society to trouble themselves about domestic concerns, especially babies. They scarcely ever see Rosie; and when they do they always moan over her—say what a pity it is she wasn't a boy, and that she is so delicate she will never be reared. But, please God, they may be mistaken."

"They shall," said Hannah, between her teeth; feeling that, if she could so bargain with Providence, she would gladly exchange ten or twenty years of her own pale life for that little life just beginning, the destiny of which none could foresee.

Mr. Rivers went on talking. It seemed such a relief to him to talk.

"Of course, my father and they all would have liked a boy best. My eldest brother, you are aware—well, poor fellow, he grows worse instead of better. None of us ever see him now. I shall be the last of my name. A name which has descended in an unbroken line, they say, for centuries. We are supposed to have been De la Riviere, and to have come over with William the Conqueror. Not that I care much for this sort of thing." And yet he looked as if he did, a little; and, standing by his fire-side, tall and handsome, with his regular Norman features, and well-knit Norman frame, he was not an unworthy representative of a race which must have had suffi-

cient elements of greatness, physical and moral, to be able to keep itself out of obscurity all these centuries. "I am rather Whiggish myself; but Sir Austin is a Tory of the old school, and has certain crochets about keeping up the family. Things are just a little hard for my father."

"What is hard? I beg your pardon—I am afraid I was not paying much attention to what you said just then. I thought," Hannah laughed and blushed a little, "I thought I heard the baby."

Mr. Rivers laughed too. "The baby will be Aunt Hannah's idol, I see that. Don't spoil her, that is all. Grandmamma is always warning me that she must not be spoiled." Then seeing the same ominous flash in Miss Thelluson's eye, he added, "Nay, nay; you shall have Rosie all to yourself, never fear. I am only too thankful to have you here. I hope you will make yourself happy. Preserve for me my fragile little flower, my only child, and I shall bless you all my days."

Hannah silently extended her hand: her brother-in-law grasped it warmly. Tears stood in both their eyes, but still, the worst of this meeting was over. They had reached the point when they could talk calmly of ordinary things, and consult together over the motherless child, who was now first object to both. And though, whether the widower felt it or not, Hannah still felt poor Rosa's continual presence, as it were; heard her merry voice in pauses of conversation; saw the shadow of her dainty little form standing by her husband's side,—these remembrances she knew were morbid, and not to be encouraged. They would fade, and they ought to fade, gradually and painlessly, in the busy anxieties of real life. Which of us, in dying, would wish it to be otherwise? Would we choose to be to our beloved a perpetually aching grief, or a tender, holy memory? I think, the latter. Hannah, who knew something about sorrow, thought so too.

"Good-night," she said, rising not regretfully the instant the clock struck ten. "I am an early bird, night and morning. Shall you object to that? No house goes well, unless the mistress is early in the morning."

The moment she had said the word she would have given anything to unsay it. That sweet, dead mistress, who used to come fluttering down-stairs like a white bird, with a face fresh as a rose,—would the time ever come when her husband had forgotten her?

Not now, at any rate. "Yes," he answered, with evident pain; "Yes; you are the mistress here now. I put you exactly in her place,—to manage everything as she did. She would wish it so. Oh, if we only had her back again!—just for one week, one day! But she never will come back any more!"

He turned away; the forlorn man whom God had smitten with the heaviest sorrow, the sharpest loss, that a man can know. What con-

solation could Hannah offer him? None, except the feeble one that, in some measure, she could understand his grief; because over her love too the grave had closed. For a moment she thought she would say that; but her lips, when she opened them, seemed paralysed. Not yet, at any rate,—not yet. Not till she knew him better, and, perhaps, he her.

So she only took his hand, and again said "Good-night;" adding softly, "God bless you and yours!"

"He has blessed us, in sending Aunt Hannah to take care of us."

And so that first evening, which she had looked forward to with no small dread, was over and done.

But long after Hannah had retired, she heard her brother-in-law walking about the house, with restless persistency, opening and shutting door after door, then ascending to his own room with weary steps, and locking himself in—not to sleep, for he had told her that he often lay awake till dawn. She did not sleep either; her thoughts were too busy, and the change in her monotonous life too sudden and complete for anything like repose.

She sat at her window and looked out. It was a goodly night, and the moon made everything bright as day. All along the hill-top was a clear view, but the valley below was filled with mist, under which its features, whether beautiful or not, were utterly indistinguishable. That great white sea of vapour looked as mysterious as the to-morrow into which she could not penetrate; the new life, full of new duties and ties, now opening before her just when she thought all were ended. It interested her a little. She wondered vaguely how things would turn out, just as she wondered how the valley, hid under that misty sea, would look at six o'clock next morning. But soon her mind went back, as it always did in the moonlight, to her own silent past—her own people, her father, mother, sisters, all dead and buried—to her lost Arthur, with whom life too was quite done. He seemed to be saying to her, not near, for he had been dead so long that even his memory had grown phantom-like and far away, but whispering from some distant sphere, words she had read somewhere the other day—

"Oh maid most dear, I am not here,
I have no place, no part:
No dwelling more on sea or shore—
But only in thy heart."

"In my heart! in my heart!" she repeated to herself, and thought how impossible it was that any living love could ever have supplanted—ever could supplant—the dead.

"THE SONGS OF THE WRENS."*

I.

MAY the year 1871 be a happy one for all true lovers.

The Poet Laureate has undertaken, with the assistance of Mr. Arthur Sullivan, to explode the old Shakspearian fallacy about the course of true love never running smooth. Anything more smooth than the loves of the Wrens can hardly be imagined—indeed the hero seems to feel this almost oppressively towards the seventh song. What the feelings of the lady Wren may have been between courtship and marriage we can only gather very indistinctly—whether she sighed or smiled behind "the Rose and the Clematis" on the other side of her "Window-pane"—whether she ever had any misgivings or fits of depression, or floods of tears "when the winds were up in the morning," we are not told. But it is quite plain that her romantic lover feels his own good fortune almost too much for him, and finds it absolutely necessary to make a little moan, just enough to relieve the monotony of his joy, until, in spite of himself, he is conducted by easy stages to a state of uninterrupted hymeneal felicity.

It is not easy to see what good reason Mr. Tennyson could have for speaking so slightly in his short preface of these songs. Had they been given to the public without a word of comment they would have been understood. No one would have expected any deep or hidden meaning—no one would have looked for any profound analysis of character. People would have looked for this—the first love that comes but once—the gentle, dream-life of the early years that too often passes away, leaving no reality or lasting fruition. "The tender grace of a day"—sometimes destined to find its close before the dawn of maturity, at others reaching through the long years, touching with kind radiance the decline of life until the very shades of sunset seem thronging with the pulses of the morning.

Poets and novelists have revelled in the description of First Love; but few have cared to carry the first love to a happy close. The temptation has been found too great. At a given signal the rival invariably turns up; even if he is kept off to the middle of the second volume, we know that he is on his way. There is the charming little vignette in vol. i. The hero, in his first term at college, floating down the glorified river Cam or Isis. The fresh young girl of six-

* "The Window; or, The Songs of the Wrens." Words written for Music by Alfred Tennyson, Poet Laureate; the Music by Arthur Sullivan. Strahan & Co.

teen is seated at the helm, and, dipping her hand in the water, as Royal Academicians know how, feels for the first time in her life something which is neither the tepid stream, nor the softened sunlight, nor the summer wind, but a delightful combination of all three, mingled in some indescribable manner with the presence of the lazy oarsman, whom for the first time in her life she is half afraid to look up at. Then we are very much mistaken if presently a water-lily is not gathered; or, better still, Sixteen tumbles bodily into the water, to the immense satisfaction of Twenty, who easily rescues her in his stalwart arms, and, laying her softly down on the sunny bank, discovers that she is not hurt, only a little frightened, and thereupon instantly proposes marriage. But—— And then vol. ii. brings in the abominable Guardsman and the county ball, and the idyll of first love has an end. And then it is said, that is so much more true to life than if Twenty married Sixteen straight away; and no doubt, as a rule, neither men nor women marry their first loves, but we are not at all sure that in many cases it might not be much better for them if they did. How often does a man come to offer a very worn-out, second-hand kind of affection to a woman whose heart has been already appropriated two or three times! How often does a young man, who hardly knows the measure of his feelings, fall an easy matrimonial prey to a woman old enough to be his mother! How often does a girl of twenty make herself over to forty and £2,000 a year, without ever having felt anything beyond a vague liking for him or any one else! Then, we say, let us have a downright, unsophisticated, thorough-going love-match—just for once in a way. Let the two be both very young, the girl “shy of the shy,” but perfectly infected with the boyish impetuosity of her juvenile lover. For once let us have no villains brought on the stage, no suicides in dark pools, no prussic acid at midnight, no intolerable papas to obstruct the action of the drama, no tuft-hunting mammas to break their daughters’ hearts, no bores to talk goody, no rich and abusive uncles, who cannot be got round before the end of the third volume, by which time every one who has not been poisoned has probably gone mad. We give the Poet Laureate the credit here, as elsewhere, of having kept his finger on the pulse of the age, and without in the least pandering to vulgar tastes, of administering to his sick patient the Public, exactly the kind of restorative he required.

At a time when people were a little used up with Wordsworth without understanding him, and a little scandalised with Byron whilst doting upon him, the Laureate paid a graceful tribute to the first great seer in the preface to what is now known as vol. i. of Tennyson’s poems, and did his best to make the passion of love once more respectable in “Locksley Hall.”

At a time when the ladies of America had not yet discovered how to be learned without affectation, or even educated without the most grotesque impudence, Mr. Tennyson taught the women of England how

"To give or keep, to live and learn to be
All that not harms distinctive womanhood."

Nor is it easy to say how much of the restraint and propriety which now characterizes the "Woman's Rights" movement in England is due to the sound and attractive teaching of the "Princess." It is, indeed, a curious proof of the real hold which this writer has over the principles which are at work in his own generation, that the "Princess," which, when it first appeared, was thought by many to be of less importance than some of the previous poems, has now come to be used as a sort of text-book by all who are at this moment interested in the subject of women's education and women's employment; and I might well ask whether Miss Garrett's recent election to a seat on the London School-Board does not prove the immense and growing interest of all classes in the subject which Mr. Tennyson opened up now more than twenty years ago.

It would not be difficult to show how the "In Memoriam" was, in fact, the best kind of answer which a deeply sceptical and introspective age is likely to find to those

"Obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things
Fallings from us, vanishings,
Blank misgivings——"

which are for ever presenting themselves in new forms and will not be said nay.

"Maud" is again interesting as a psychological study, and is highly useful and instructive in an age of delirious rhapsodists as showing how a poet may write about madness without once losing his own head, or forgetting the difference between the action of healthy and that of morbid sentiments.

The intelligent reader can supply for himself numerous other illustrations of the way in which the Poet Laureate has happily combined a supply of what the public has happened to want, with what was good for the public to have.

We only desire now to point out that these little lyrical fragments before us now to exception to the usual Tennysonian rule. The readers of prose and poetry throughout the world have now been for years ungratified by the pleasing spectacle of two young lovers permitted to rush into each other's arms without let or hindrance, without an afterthought or a sigh. Mr. Tennyson has stepped forward at the nick of time; he has descended with tabret and harp into the literary banquet halls; there he has found a public with heated eyes poring over the "Ring and the Book," shouting wildly with thick voices the Aphrodisiacs of Mr. Swinburne, gloating over the morbid anatomy of D. G. Rossetti, or sitting apart surrounded by the bloodless shadows of the "Earthly Paradise," and in a moment, as the

doors of the banquet-hall are thrown open wide, lo ! he of the kingly idylls and he of the Orpheus lyre are heralded in ! A cloud of incense greets the nostrils of the great poet accustomed to breathe no less fragrant air, the lamps leap into crimson flame, and wink at Orpheus in a friendly manner ; all eyes are fixed upon the imposing couple, all ears listen for the first notes of prelude struck by the rare player, and followed (may the too bold image be pardoned) by the melodious voice of the bard himself as he begins to chant, with a most delicate regard to time and tune, exactly in the key of C minor—

“The lights and shadows fly !”

II.

But who is Orpheus ? This was a question which was eagerly asked some years ago when Mr. Sullivan's music to the *Tempest* was first produced in England. That question has long since been answered to the entire satisfaction of the musical public.

Mr. Arthur Sullivan gained the Mendelssohn Scholarship at Leipsic, and has composed besides the *Tempest*, the cantata of *Kenilworth*, an orchestral symphony, several concert-overtures, operatic music, notably the operetta of *Cox and Box*, the oratorio of *The Prodigal Son*, pianoforte music, violoncello music, vocal music, notably some charming part-songs and some settings to songs of Shakspeare which are certainly the best which have ever been made.

Those who look with scant favour upon Mr. Sullivan's compositions declare loudly that he has reached his zenith, his friends, on the other hand, believe that he will yet rise even higher than the level reached in *The Prodigal Son*, and this is a very high level, so high that nothing so good of its kind has been produced in England since the death of Mendelssohn. Mr. Sullivan has received a great deal of tiresome encouragement from people older but less gifted than himself. Every young composer must submit to be duly patted on the back by a large number of persons who in their hearts think success a mistake, because they have never been able to succeed ; nor is it at all surprising to find the best English composers now living occasionally pooh-pooched, with a little faint praise and quantities of good advice, by the sort of intelligent folk who greeted Mendelssohn as a pianist of some promise, or even went so far as to call him “un jeune homme d'un énorme talent.” *Risum teneatis, amici !*

Mr. Sullivan probably knows better than most people what are his failures, nor is he likely to be misled by a crowd of fond and foolish flatterers, who may rate some of his successes far more highly than he himself does. Of one thing we are certain—that he can well afford to smile at ignorant critics and to keep silence at ill-natured ones, and hitherto he has proved himself almost alone in the musical world admirably impervious to insult and full of good humour with abusive critics and fatiguing flatterers alike.

The songs before us are unequal in interest, and so are the words, but there is every sign that in no one instance has the composer failed to do his best—indeed, so fastidious has he been that the music to one of these twelve songs has actually been left unpublished because Mr. Sullivan could not quite satisfy himself with it. Nothing can be more unreasonable than to blame a suite of songs because we may like some of them less than others. Nay, it might be musically speaking, a downright blemish were each song to be equally laboured, equally full of harmony and striking melody. Who would paint a picture, or a series of pictures, to be looked at all at once or *en suite*, with nothing but primary colours? Who would compose a play in which the hero or heroine should deliver an equally sensational speech in each scene? This kind of bad art has been attempted in many Italian operas with disastrous consequences. A man who has been staring at nothing but the sun until his eyes ache, will not only fail to be pleasurably excited, but will actually be made insensible for some time to every other object. We must have relief and repose in music as in every other art, and we must have our melody and harmony in some sort of relation to the emotion expressed by the words of the poem; we must have a grey-tinted song to a grey-tinted sentiment, we must tolerate simplicity, sometimes amounting almost to baldness, when contrast or recreation is required by the ear.

Many people seem to demand in every song a pretty well rounded tune with a little bit of striking harmony somewhere, and a steady but simple accompaniment. The notion of musical phrases expressive of certain emotional progressions, often of a somewhat indefinite order, never seems to have been suggested to them; but this is what every true song-writer will aim at; any one who will glance through Schubert's songs will find such arrangements of musical phrases—a whole song occupying perhaps half a page or three-quarters, no repetition, no rounded melody, the musical action divided at least equally between the voice and the accompaniment—that is Schubert's idea of the way in which some words should be set to music; when the words possess a certain lyrical stamina or completeness, then we have what the public recognise generally as a song. But how many exquisite fragments are never heard at all in the concert-room because they fail to satisfy the essentially vulgar conception which a semi-musical public has of a song! To say that any of the songs before us are fragments would be untrue, either of the words or the music; each is a finished lyric, and each will be accepted readily as in every sense a regular song; but the importance and interest of the music varies with the importance and interest of the sentiment. Therefore these songs should be read *en suite* and sung *en suite*. Then, and not till then, the relation of the parts to the whole will be understood, and we venture to say that the judicious hearer will not be disappointed by the result.

We congratulate Mr. Sullivan upon what we may call his *vehicle*—we allude to the form in which these songs are published. By adopting the literary rather than the musical form, and issuing his music from a book-publisher, and such a book-publisher as Mr. Strahan, Mr. Sullivan has not felt himself bound to write his accompaniments down to the level of every pianoforte-playing young lady. That is the way, we are informed by the music-publishers, to make a song sell. Let there be a faint tinkle of melody, and a still fainter tinkle of accompaniment, and every school-girl in the kingdom will buy and warble the song to her own great delectation and that of her admirers. In the "Songs of the Wrens" the musical Philistines have fairly been defeated. We do not think that any one will have the effrontery to sing them without having studied the accompaniments, nor will any one glance at the accompaniments without perceiving that they have been written for people who possess the sufficiently rare qualities in music of patience and intelligence.

I will now allude briefly to a very vexed, a very unnecessarily vexed, question—the question of musical plagiarism. When a new bird from over the water arrives in an English wood, the native songsters set upon him, pluck all his feathers out, and try to roar him down. In other words, every new composer has his compositions pulled to pieces by a number of people, who will hum you bars and be ready to tell you where the writer has got all his ideas from. "The man is not original," they say; "he is made up of little bits of everybody. He has got a nose from Gounod, a shock head of hair from Beethoven, his eyes belong to Schumann, and he is padded all over with Mendelssohn. His brave boots and spurs come from Weber, and the feather in his cap is the property of the late lamented Franz Schubert. Such a made-up man we never saw!" chuckle the connoisseurs, and the paragraph writers take up the chorus, highly delighted with their fancied discoveries, and lose no time in exhibiting their critical faculty to the public, as Mr. Matthew Arnold would say, "in all its captivating nudity."

Are there, then, no thieves? Certainly there are—in literature, painting, and music. But assimilation is not robbery; neither is quotation. Original men do not rob; they assimilate. It is the little men who rob, and call their robbery assimilation. But they are incapable of assimilating: they can only steal, and strut about in borrowed plumes, which never did and never can belong to them. When a musical phrase or progression has been once discovered, it cannot be re-discovered, neither can it be patented; it is henceforth public property; it is there for you, if you can write music; you may use it if you can; it is an open secret—it needs no protection—it can protect itself. You must not transfer it bodily to your pages, context and all; that is simply copying other people's writing into your own; but in almost any other way you are at liberty to mould

what you find, and if you can succeed in putting your *imprimatur* upon it, it will be yours. A chord, a note, a juxtaposition will often be enough to transform the whole emotional intent of a bar, or even a phrase. The question is not what is the size, or the weight, of the coin, but whose image and superscription is upon it. Chaucer is a huge borrower: through Lydgate and Caxton we are told that he drew continually upon Guido di Colonna, Petrarch, Boccaccio, William of Lorris, John of Meun, Lollius of Urbino. "As for poor Glover," says Emerson, "he uses him as if he were only a brick-kiln or stone-quarry, out of which to build his house." The same sort of thing has been said of Shakspeare; the same is true of Pope and Dryden. Only a few years ago we were informed that Handel had borrowed nearly everything he ever wrote; but we all feel that the question is not whose was that music once, but whose is it now and for evermore?

The transforming touch of originality is the one sufficient excuse for all so-called robbery. If I have not this originality, I am a thief; if I have, then what I take belongs to me by a kind of divine right.

God says to every man, "Here is the world. Take whatever belongs to you. Whatever else you may take will never be yours."

Mr. Sullivan's music is full of musical assimilations. He takes right and left what belongs to him. Every phrase or chord which floats through his head, and which happens to suit him, he appropriates with the air of a master who plucks fruit in his own garden. To this is due in great measure the freshness of his music. Inferior men, haunted by the bugbear of originality, and always timid of stumbling upon something that has been used before, twist and torture their phrases, in order to dodge all their predecessors. They are like men dancing on tiptoe in a wine-press, in order to avoid crushing the grapes, whilst Mr. Sullivan leaps joyously upon the rich fruit of all his predecessors till the red juice spurts forth, and is fearlessly quaffed by him.

Of course this free and pleasant roving in other men's vineyards lays Mr. Sullivan open to much criticism. But he has an easy retort. He may say to his accusers, "If you knew as much of people who wrote before Mozart or Handel, or chose to apply your knowledge, you would find that they borrowed as fearlessly as I do whenever they chose." And if any one should then reply, "You are not Mozart or Handel," Mr. Sullivan may answer, "I never said I was."

We shall, then, be understood to say nothing in disparagement of Mr. Sullivan when we allude to Schubert's "Gretchen am Spinnrad" and the "Junge Nonne" in connection with the accompaniment to the first song. In song vii., at the words, "Ay is the song," &c., we had a mixed reminiscence of "Then shall the righteous shine," and a phrase in a certain slow movement in a violoncello sonata of Mendelssohn's.

But these cases of what we have termed musical assimilation abound in Mr. Sullivan's music, and indeed in the music of every other composer with which we happen to be acquainted, and let any one who feels inclined to call such use of common property theft carefully peruse the following words of Emerson:—"A man having once shown himself capable of original writing, is entitled thenceforth to steal from the writings of others at discretion. Thought is the property of him who can entertain it, and of him who can adequately place it. A certain awkwardness marks the use of borrowed thoughts; but as soon as we have learned what to do with them, they become our own."*

But let us return to the jaded revellers in the literary banquet-hall. There is a certain fresh sweep about Orpheus' lyre that seems at once to arrest their attention, and to have the effect of clearing the heated atmosphere of their oppressed spirits.

SPRING.

I.

A land of winds and clouds and flying lights, and a sleepless young lover out in the bleak autumn morning on the slope of a hill-side, watching the flashes of pale light on the distant window-pane of his mistress.

Such is the picture that rises before us.

As the lover watches, his spirit seems to become one with the hurrying clouds and the moving Lights and Shadows, "all running on one way," restless like his heart, seeming to seek repose in one sweet little face alone; but the hard winds that "are up in the morning" are constantly coming in with angry little unsympathetic gusts, just to remind him that he is not yet, with the Lights and Shadows, so near the desired "Face," but alone on the slope of a bleak hill-side. The ceaseless rushing of the accompaniment aptly conveys the hungry kind of unrest in the lover's soul, whilst the very skilful transition from B major in an unusual manner to C major, expresses admirably the way in which at times a morbid train of thought may be suddenly broken up by such a prosaic thing as a hard, pitiless gust of wind, making the lover for a second rather intent upon drawing his mantle more closely about him, than upon indulging in any more tender meditation. But when our hero has duly seen to his comforter at the end of each verse, and two or three bars have been thrown in to prepare us for the next stage, the delicate vein of restless sentiment is re-commenced with the same accompaniment, passing, however, at the third verse into a delightful melodic episode in which the clouds are followed like hunting hounds until the pursuit ends in the tenderest meditation upon the "little face" so jealously guarded

* From "Shakspeare, or the Poet."

by the sunlit window-pane. Even the harsh winds seem to be lulled for a moment into a sympathetic cadence at the close of this verse, and the chords, lightly touched with an emotion of the tenderest regret, remind us appropriately enough of the "Arabian Love-song," in some respects the most original of all Mr. Sullivan's compositions. The music of the last verse, in which the feverish unrest is resumed and carried on with an ever-growing intensity to the passionate close, is a fine example of the way in which a whole verse may be turned into a kind of *coda*. The sonorous pedal passage, sustained without interruption, after the manner of Bach or Mendelssohn, through eight bars, admirably prepares the ear for the subtle change in the accompaniment from minor to major on the words, "Brightens and darkens—darkens and brightens." At the end of this phrase the winds that have been held in check for a little while get perfectly frantic, and break out into a regular hurricane, leaving the listener with the feeling that they must be again "up in the morning" with a vengeance. In fact, it is more than probable that at this particular juncture the lover buttons up his coat, and walks home to breakfast.

SUMMER.

II.

Lighter than any petal of Rose or Clematis fluttering from trellised casement floats the next song, tender with pleading melody, upon the warm summer air. No valley now lies between the lover and his mistress; he is close under her window; she may peep out at any moment; the clinging Vine and the Eglantine are between them; the flowers stand and shake before him, even as a little heart trembles close by. Who would not be melted by the very first notes of the tender appeal? The soul of the Rose and Clematis seems to have passed into the twining accompaniment. Nothing more need be said of this exquisite little song: it drops upon the scented air like the flower which at the lover's passionate entreaty falls from his lady's bower, shaken out by the sigh of a wanton wind, or maybe the furtive touch of a small, white hand behind the tangled Vine and Eglantine.

AUTUMN.

III.

Sitting alone upon the brown hill-side!

No light upon the casement now, no shadow flying over the sweet little face; the flowers all gathered, the vine all withered and sere; "Gone till the end of the year!"

The accompaniment renders the quiet musing of a heart beating slow, as with the loss of half its life-blood. The reverie rises indeed into something like a passionate wail with the words "a cloud in my heart and a storm in the air;" but never loses a certain tone of interior musing, the meditation of one whose heart is separated from

all surrounding objects, and united by a kind of spiritual affinity to the distant source of its desire. The ascending phrases

"Flown to the east and the west"

are of great breadth and meaning; the sound kindles an emotion like the going forth of the light of the morning when the day dawns and the shadows flee away. Even the wind now is too material a minister for the lover. Nothing less swift and elemental than the light of the sun itself can bear the burden of his tireless spirit to the heart of the beloved.

But where is she? That remains a mystery—"down in the South is a flash and a groan—she is there." Is she a "besieged resident?" Impossible; the lover's reverie would have been far less measured were his mistress in danger; he would probably have started immediately with an ambulance for the walls of Paris. What the flash and the groan mean must be left to the ingenious reader to decide. Although a "flash and a groan" may be a somewhat inadequate description of the war either in Italy, Austria, Denmark, or France, it has suggested to Mr. Sullivan a very fine transition (*stringendo*) from C major, through the key of D flat, back to C major, with "a groan," which leads immediately to a highly effective close in the same strain of subdued reverie with which the song opens.

WINTER.

IV.

The first hard frost stealing through every unguarded chink and cranny into the very "heart of the house," seems to act like a wholesome tonic upon our hero; indeed he is a kind of walking thermometer, roused by a sharp spring wind, melted by the soft allurements of the summer, despondent at the fall of the leaf, but ready to revive when the frost comes, and take a good smart run down that same hill-slope, and no doubt come home somewhat hungry, but impervious to cold, and full of new heart and courage. Indeed, he is so merry that of course he must have heard some sort of good news from "the south;" at all events he reflects that every chilling frost brings him nearer to the time when all summer shall come back to him in the face of his beloved.

Nothing can be more happy and wintry than such expressions as "You have bitten the heel of the going year," "You bite far into the heart of the house." The music here—"far into"—sounds exactly as if the tooth of the frost had found a weak place and quickly stolen in and given a sly nip; "You have bitten into the heart of the earth," here is, on the other hand, obstinate gnawing of cold, persistent, but assailing in vain the breast-clad in triple steel of the lover, who keeps shouting "Not into mine;" assisted by such fortifying and delightful counterpoint in octaves, as gives a most pungent

brilliancy to the close of the song. We can well imagine how Mr. Santley will revel in this little *bravoura* piece.

V.

The lover's heart leaps forward to the spring, although the snows of winter have scarcely yet arrived. But the songs of birds are ringing in his ears, and the loves of the birds make him think of his bird with the shining head, or, as he here expresses it, "with gold for hair." The accompaniment is highly expressive of the twittering of birds, not the full notes of summer, but the winter notes, short snatches of song and fugitive chirrups; but it is redeemed from the degradation which must always accompany merely imitative music by the really melodic phrases which peep out from time to time, and the form of birds' twitter is thrown over the whole, like a thin, though suggestive, veil concealing but slightly some very beautiful resources of harmony. The bird's song and the bird's grace is like the beauty of women, but not like the love of women. "Women's love and men's love" passes not with "the weather," "To love once and for ever!" that must be their motto. Give the fickleness of Time to the birds, but a changeless Eternity to the loves of men and women. So in effect sings our youthful and confident hero in the innocent pride and elation of first love. The musical phrases

"To love once and for ever,"

and

"All have a nest together,"

are substantially the same, but with a slight variation, by which the ascending melody D G F is in the second verse transferred with great brilliancy of effect from the accompaniment to the voice. At the close of the song, through about seven bars, all the little birds get up in groups, and fly away from the lawns where they have been feeding, to the neighbouring pinewoods. Mr. Sullivan can mean nothing but this by the little gush of scrambled dotted chords shaken out like dew from the wings of the feathery tribe as they leave the "high hall garden."

VI.

The young lady has no doubt returned, and therefore the end of the year must have come and passed. The first reflection suggested upon seeing once more the object of his affections, is that there is no one like her. This original observation seems to raise the youthful adorer to the highest pitch of enthusiasm and confidence. He has had no doubt good reason to suppose that "Fine little hands and fine little feet" will have no great objection to become his property by marriage, and although some one is "shy of the shy," "somebody knows" that shyness is not always the insurmountable obstacle which it looks, and that in fact, like ice, it is only hard so long as it

is kept away from the fire. The melting process of proposing to the young lady has now to be gone through, and in order to spare her feelings, rather than his own, he determines to avoid the usual "Wilt thou be mine?" scene, and send her a written proposal. It is perhaps a shame thus to write the whole thing into prose, but if we are to draw any invidious distinction between these charmingly appropriate little songs, we should say that the inspiration of both poet and musician sinks lowest in this sixth song. The fact is, that the lover is throughout so well satisfied with himself, and so confident of success, that there is really no room for any high level of sentiment. The song is none the less appropriate as a legitimate episode of the miniature drama, and prepares our minds for the despondency, which is reached in the next lyric.

VII.

The letter is gone, but oh the reply! Suspense, and all the doleful crew of doubts and fears that attend upon that monster, now suddenly break in on our hero's joyful sense of security. The impetuous heart has to wait, and all opportunity of immediate action being for a season over, the impatient lover is instantly filled with the darkest misgivings. The weather outside, which always seems to have a certain specific effect upon him, is not cheerful; in fact the mist and the rain seem to be so unkind as to obscure completely that distant window-pane which his straining eyes have so often watched from daydawn to sunset. The moaning of the wind and the pelting of the rain is excellently managed in the accompaniment without ever being overdone or degenerating (as in much descriptive orchestral music) into mere musical melodrama. A little bit of blue sky, discerned dimly through the hurrying rain-clouds, may have suggested the flow of tranquil melody in the middle,—“Ay is the song of the wedded spheres;” but nothing can be more gloomy than the meditation suggested by the most uncalled-for presentiments of approaching dissolution, in which the unhappy lover, already rejected in his too fertile imagination, pictures himself in close company with the “worm,” and declares, with that lugubrious kind of sentiment in which perfectly healthy and substantially happy youth so often delights, that, when he is gone, “the wet West-wind and the World may go on!”

VIII.

Then follows an excellent little bit of Shakspeare, and anything more appropriate and Orpheus-like than the music can hardly be conceived. As a piece of pure and singing melody—“Winds are loud, and you are dumb,” from beginning to end, is quite perfect. It represents the softened mood of the lover, whose gloomy fit is now over—who does not really believe he is going to be rejected, but

allows his soul to flow out in tender entreaty that his love, for true love's sake, may be accepted, and no doubt such pithy lines as

"Love will come but once a life,
After loves of maids and men
Are but dainties dressed again,"

are destined to be quoted as often as

"The moan of doves in immemorial elms
And murmuring of innumerable bees."

IX.

The arrival of the letter gives rise to a perfect little gem of graceful beauty. To delineate such very definite stages of emotion without a sacrifice of musical form in so short a compass is a difficulty which has been triumphantly surmounted in "Two little hands that meet." The lover, holding his fate in that tiny note clasped by a seal of tiny hands, comes very slowly to the decision expressed in the sweetest piece of love-sick melody—

"I must take you and break you,"

and in the accompaniment we actually catch a fugitive glimpse of dear old Sebastian Bach, looking out of the last century, with that kindly face of his, and nodding his portentous wig approvingly at the loves of the nineteenth century. But the seal is still unbroken, although the words are uttered, "Take, take! break, break!" for then come two whole bars of slow, irresolute accompaniment, but it is the last delay, for suddenly, with *ff* *risoluto*—"Break, break! and all's done!"

SECOND SPRING.

X.

The music to this tenth song has not been published, although we do not see why it should be harder than some others to set to music. All the birds of the forest are summoned to shout in a joyous chorus over the happy pair. And any one who will stand, at the dewy dawn of some spring morning, in a quiet place, where the fir-trees are thick and the limes and larches budding whilst all the wood "stands in a mist of green," will be convinced that Mr. Tennyson must have very closely watched the ways of the birds before he could have written—

"Look how they tumble the blossom, the mad little tits.
Look how he flits,
The fire-crowned king of the wrens from out of the pine."

XI.

What excitement there can be said to be in the love story is now very nearly at an end. But in the eleventh song the lady speaks for

the first time. Soliloquy is exchanged for dialogue—dialogue short and straight to the point. The rushing accompaniment, *Allegro Molto*, may well represent the sands galloping through the hour-glass; the impatient lover grudges every moment which stands between him and his perfect felicity, and he seems to fear that Time itself will give him the slip, unless he takes him by the forelock. Under these circumstances, "Love, fix a day," is a very natural request. "Shy of the shy," who does not seem to be quite free from the coquetry of her sex, murmurs, *piano*, "A year hence." "We shall both be grey," objects the lover. "A month hence," readily answers the lady. The lover shakes his head, and the accompaniment dashes off *con fuoco* until the lady summons up her courage to suggest, "A week hence," beyond this she declines to go; but like other young ladies, is not unwilling to be led, providing the lover will take the responsibility upon himself. She waives her own right of choice in the words, "Wait a little, wait a little, you shall fix a day!" In the striking words, "To-morrow love, to-morrow, and that's an age away," the hero proves himself equal to the occasion, and assisted by the accompaniment, *sempre crescendo*, gives strict injunctions to the sun to "blaze," *ff con forza*, "upon her window, in honour of the day;" a reading which strikes our feeble and limited intelligence as superior to the poet's latest emendation, "And honour all the day." The corrected version, which appears in the poem as printed separately from the song, is doubtless an attempt to escape from a certain festive and popular ring which hangs about the phrase, "in honour of." But the superior refinement of "and honour all," shows the mark of the file, and is attained at the sacrifice of a certain boyish freshness. Such criticism as this will always be open to cavil; but we believe that it has hitherto been found impossible for bleary-eyed mortals to blink at the sun without detecting, or fancying they detected, some spots in it.

XII.

The wooing is ended, and the lover seems to have for an instant that feeling which has stolen over so many a child when the butterfly he has been pursuing breathlessly is at last within his eager hands. Was not the chase better?

"O the woods and the meadows,
Woods where we hid from the wet,
Stiles where we stayed to be kind,
Meadows in which we met."

Lines which are perfectly full of indefinable grace, and bear what a critic has happily termed the "incommunicable touch of the master." Then on the very verge of the "golden close" in his overflowing joy, he indulges in a momentary misgiving. Occurring when and where

it does, it is more like a sentimental luxury than a real phase of serious doubt. As when one parched with thirst holds high the clear water between him and the sun, saying to himself, "What if this sparkling draught should suddenly vanish!" so the lover questions his heart—

"O heart, are you great enough for love?
I have heard of thorns and briers."

He is not really sounding his heart, and although the accompaniment lingers over this little bit of sentimental questioning, in another moment the fiery passion of our hero breaks forth beyond all control with—

"Over the thorns and the briers,
Over the meadows and stiles,
Over the world to the end of it,
Flash for a million miles."

Mr. Sullivan, both in melting sentiment and fiery *clan*, has here risen to the occasion. There is a passage in the middle of the song—

"O lighten into my eyes and my heart,
Into my heart and my blood,"

which it is impossible to hear without fancying it sung by Mr. Sims Reeves, so admirably tenoresque is the conception of the phrase in its warmth and tenderness, and the concluding *piu vivace con anima*, and *accelerando*, are full of vigour and brilliancy amounting to *bravoura* writing in the last few bars.

Let the white horses pass with flashing wheels and white-favoured postillions. Let bachelors yawn, spinsters sneer, and cynics growl. For our parts, we prefer to "Sing heigho, young maids must marry!" In conclusion, as critics are nothing in the estimation of the public unless they find fault and give good advice, we trust the following suggestions will be accepted as a feeble attempt to acquit ourselves of the above conventional duties:—1st, then, we suggest that in future editions the preface be left out; 2nd, that but one version of the songs be printed instead of the two conflicting versions now presented to the public in Mr. Strahan's handsome volume; 3rd, that Mr. Sullivan prepare some music for the beautiful little lyric which at present stands bereaved of its melodious counterpart; 4th, that the British public buy the book.

H. R. HAWEIS.

HINTS TO ARMY REFORMERS.

BY A STAFF-SERGEANT.

UNDER ordinary circumstances the question of Army Reform could not have been much longer delayed, but the sudden outbreak of the present war has given it an importance and significance it never possessed before.

Without pretending to enter very deeply into so hackneyed a subject, let us ask ourselves three plain questions, and endeavour to elicit practical answers:—What do we want? Why do we want it? How are we to get it?

It is to be feared that the most noisy declaimers against our present military system do not know what they want, or, at least, what the country requires.

It is much easier to find fault with an existing evil than to suggest a feasible remedy. Our insular position, and our vast foreign and colonial possessions, place us in a different position from that of any other nation, and it is idle therefore to institute any comparison between our military system and that of any other European State.

A large standing army, as armies are reckoned now-a-days, is unnecessary in our case; while, in consequence of the amount of foreign service our troops have to perform, a short service system is inexpedient, if not impossible. But our army being so small, there is an absolute necessity of our having a thoroughly-organised army of reserve.

Briefly, then, what we want is:—A small, compact, highly-trained army, especially the artillery, cavalry, and departmental corps. These branches of the army should be considerably increased, as it requires more time to make them efficient than it does to turn out infantry fit for service. We should also have an administrative and departmental staff, capable of meeting the requirements not only of the regular army, but of our army of reserve. The latter should consist of not less than half a million of men, trained and equipped, and having an organised transport, commissariat, and ambulance, sufficient to enable such an army to take the field in a week after the first note of alarm has been sounded.

This leads us to the consideration of the second question—Why do we want such an army?

The answer to this question is easy. We have possessions in every clime, our telegraph wires will soon encircle the globe, our

ships are found in every port, our merchants in every mart in the world. The possession of so much territory, influence, and wealth, may well be a source of pride and congratulation; while our military unpreparedness to protect such gigantic interests, or even to guard our own homes, must be a source of regret and alarm to the lover of his country. The fact is, we have become so rich and prosperous as to awaken the envy of other nations; while our present military organisation and resources are such as to excite their contempt.

Our existence as a first-rate power cannot long remain unquestioned with such a state of feeling on the part of our neighbours. Opportunities will arise, or may be made, to give practical effect to such feelings; hence the need of military reform.

It is quite true that England has no frontiers in the same sense as Belgium or Holland; but even those who advance such a reason for our comparatively helpless condition, must admit that, wherever our flag floats or our laws and authority are recognised, is British territory to all intents and purposes. Viewed in this light, no country in the world has such an extended, complicated, and assailable frontier; and surely the most timid, forbearing Briton would look upon the capture or invasion of the most insignificant of our possessions as an invasion of British territory, and resent it accordingly.

But leaving such a contingency out of the question, those who consider the strip of sea that separates us from the continent an adequate protection from invasion, must have strangely misread history. The epochs of our national history are marked by successive invasions, and the population of these islands is in great part the offspring of successive invaders. Our grandfathers made preparations to receive an enemy should he attempt to land on our shores, but we seem to think such preparation unnecessary.

Perhaps many people believe that the age of invasions is past, but more improbable events have recently happened, and it is too soon to trust to the implicit honour and good intentions of our neighbours. We have only to look around us to see how unreal is the civilization of the age, how unpractical its Christianity.

Just twenty years ago that grand peaceful idea of the late Prince Consort (a prince whose ideas were in advance of the age), a palace sacred to art, industry, and peace, raised its glittering front in Hyde Park, and sanguine people thought the Millennium had come. What has the world been doing since?

Without inquiring too minutely into the doings of our neighbours let us glance briefly at our own warlike achievements during the intervening twenty years. At least ten distinct war medals have been bestowed on the British army for active service against an enemy. This is quite independent of the Victoria Cross, or other English or foreign decorations that may have been given. It will thus be seen that we have been engaged in a war on an average every two

years since the advent of the supposed Millennium, besides smaller disturbances not considered worthy of commemoration.

And who can say that the aspect of the world is more hopeful or peaceful in '71 than it was in '51? On the contrary, there are still many unsolved knotty questions that may have to be cut by the sword. The rapid advance in mechanical and scientific knowledge has only tended to make war more deadly, and to reduce wholesale slaughter to an exact science. Under such circumstances, those who preach peace and disarmament may be thoroughly well-meaning and in earnest, but are neither prudent nor far-seeing.

England is like the mother of a large family of grown-up, and growing-up, children, to whom her honour and good name are dear as that of a parent should be, and to whom any national reverse would be bitter and painful. Supposing it possible that England could be brought so low as unhappy France is at the present moment, what a legacy of shame and dishonour would be thus bequeathed to those young nations who are members of the great English family, and who are proud of our common origin and history!

Again, what would be the effect of such a national disaster on those alien races who are ruled by us, and who perhaps fear us more than they love us? It is not necessary to answer the question.

But it is needless to adduce more arguments in favour of our instant attention to the important question of our national security. In these days it is hard to say who are our friends and who are our foes; but friends and foes alike are well aware of our unprepared condition. For it would seem that even those who have the destinies of the nation in their keeping do not thoroughly appreciate the gravity of the situation.

It is folly to use big words in the counsels of Europe if we are not prepared to uphold them by decided action; such conduct will only increase the contempt with which our European neighbours are beginning to regard us. We need not pause to ask who is to blame for our present state of military weakness and insecurity. We are all to blame more or less. In these days of universal tax-paying any plan to save our pockets was only too readily listened to, and a false, spurious economy, which promised to give a trifling balance on the credit side of the national ledger, was too eagerly accepted. But the present is no time for mutual recrimination, nor should the subject be made a party question. The danger is great and pressing; we should lay aside all minor disputes, and face it as Englishmen are wont to face a danger or a difficulty—calmly, firmly, and earnestly. If we do so at once, we may regain the esteem of our friends and the respect of our enemies. If we do not, we may have bitter cause to regret our dream of fancied security.

Although our military organisation is utterly inadequate to meet our possible requirements, it is some consolation to know that our fleet remains. It must always be regarded as our first line of defence. In the

event of a war, however, there would be so many demands on the fleet that its insufficiency would be discovered when too late. Any scheme for placing our military resources on a safe footing will be only a half measure if the navy be neglected, and those who are conversant with the subject seem to consider that the navy, not less than the army, requires serious attention. Fortunately the intelligent public opinion of the country is at length aware of the necessity for action, and most people are prepared to say—Why we want an efficient army not less than an army of reserve.

This leads us to the consideration of the third question—How are we to get these?

Having on two previous occasions endeavoured to show why the army was unpopular, and how to remove that unpopularity, it is unnecessary to go further into the subject here.

There is no use in disguising the fact that we cannot get men of the proper stamp in sufficient numbers to recruit the army. In a time of peace our system of recruiting has broken down; it is needless to speculate what would be the result in time of war. To remedy this pressing want, some strange expedients have been suggested. The most absurd, and as far as the army is concerned the most insulting of these, has been the proposal to draft able-bodied criminals into the army against their will.

That such a proposal should have been made is not surprising; but that it should have been seriously considered or noticed either by the press or the people, is alike painful and suggestive. We must have sunk very low if we are compelled to entrust to the keeping of Bill Sykes and Co. the honour and safety of the nation. And yet our want of men is more apparent than real; as has been truly said, we want organisation rather than men. Our regulars, militia, yeomanry cavalry, and volunteers, may be roughly estimated at half a million; these are all trained men, more or less, and every one of them is a volunteer. No nation in the world can make such a statement; and it is evident there must be much latent military enthusiasm, as well as patriotism, in our constitution, after all. The regular army has been snubbed and insulted, the militia and volunteers have been ridiculed and laughed at, besides having been neglected by the authorities; such treatment, however, is beginning to tell, and men are becoming more unwilling to serve.

We want a military reformer who has sufficient energy and ability to overhaul our whole military system, and to give us an efficient, intelligent, contented army, and a real organised army of reserve. The task will be Herculean. But where is Hercules?

The first thing to be considered is the difficulty of obtaining men for the regular army. There are only two ways to overcome this—either hold out sufficient inducements, and make the army a desirable profession for the stamp of men we require, or have compulsory service in its ranks.

The first of these courses is the most preferable, and will be found most in accordance with the feelings and instincts of the country; but it will entail some additional expenditure on the part of the State. Those who grumble at our expensive military system, forget that we pay *volunteers* to perform arduous and exceptional duties, while in other countries the citizens are compelled to perform these for a nominal reward. It is doubtful if our grumbling tax-payers would be long satisfied with the decreased expenditure in our army estimates, which the introduction of the Prussian system of conscription would produce.

There is little fear that the number of volunteers wanted to complete the regular army can be got if we treat them with that consideration, and hold out to them such rewards as intelligent men, who have voluntarily embraced a hazardous and arduous profession, have a right to receive and expect. If people who are averse to soldiering want to be exempt from actual military service, they must make up their minds to pay for the indulgence; for it is one.

It is not so much a higher rate of remuneration, as an assured prospect of ultimate advancement and more considerate treatment, from his military superiors and from the public, that a soldier should have, in order to make his profession really desirable. By these remarks it is not meant to cast any reflection on the military authorities regarding their treatment of soldiers generally. To uphold and carry out the law as he finds it, is the duty of every one, from the general to the drummer-boy. It is rather a considerable modification of existing military rules and regulations that is hinted at.

The popularity of the service might be vastly increased by the amendment and modification of many existing military regulations, which press very hard on intelligent men, without any compensating benefit.

Many of these regulations come under the head "*Garrison Regulations*," "*Regimental Standing Orders*," &c., and are consequently only local and particular in their application. As a rule these regulations and rules have been framed years ago by rigid disciplinarians of the old school; and, although in some instances they have been slightly modified, they are still far from being in accordance with the ideas or instincts of the age. It is true such regulations and orders are supposed to be in accordance with the "*Queen's Regulations*;" but a minute examination of some of them would disclose considerable discrepancy; even the latter—with deference, be it said—might be slightly modified, without endangering the safety or discipline of the army.

Surely no one will assert that a soldier is made more efficient by being sent to bed in winter at nine p.m., whether he wishes it or not; or, as is the case in some regiments, by being prevented from going to bed before that hour, even if he should be tired or ailing.

So far are these petty restrictions carried in some corps, that the

men are compelled to make up their beds in such a manner that they can neither sit on their cots nor lean against their folded bedding. Officers, and the superior grades of non-commissioned officers, have quarters of their own, and messes, where, during hours of relaxation, they can assume an inclined or horizontal position, as suits their fancy; and it seems hard that the same privilege should be withheld from the rank and file.

Permission to wear plain clothes when on leave or furlough is another indulgence which is rigorously withheld from all ranks, except certain non-commissioned officers, to whom it is sometimes accorded as a special favour. Men on furlough, however, frequently do wear plain clothes, in order to escape the notice (not always complimentary) which a man in uniform is sure to attract. Their doing so is a crime, which could be punished by a lengthened term of imprisonment, and by branding the offender with the letter "D," as in a case of desertion. The best way to stop this crime is to abolish the law that makes it one.

The amount of needless duty soldiers have frequently to perform is a real hardship, for which no excuse can be made. It is a positive fact, that sentinels are frequently posted in positions where they are quite useless, and for no apparent reason, except that a sentry-box has stood there from time immemorial. When the Lieut.-General who lately commanded the troops at Aldershot assumed the command there, one of his first acts was to abolish every useless sentinel's post in camp, thereby giving the men several more "nights in bed," and thus adding materially to their health and comfort. No one will be surprised to learn that when he lately gave over the command to his successor not one of the iron churches or wooden huts was missing.

This consideration for the individual interests of the men, instead of undermining discipline or impairing efficiency, has quite the contrary effect, and it is much to be regretted that such incidents are not more numerous.

At present a great gulf separates the officers and men of the British Army. Each class lives in a world of its own, and has no feelings, thoughts, or aspirations in common; while many worthy officers of the old school would look upon any effort to bridge over that gulf as a serious attempt to undermine the British Constitution. Nor does this attempt at isolation of classes end here. In the same manner it has been attempted to separate the non-commissioned officers and men. Of course, this is so far necessary; but it may be carried too far. The object of thus separating the different grades of the army has been to inspire a salutary respect in each grade for their immediate superiors. There are other means of inspiring respect, however, besides isolation.

The best interests of the service would gain by a little more *rapprochement* between officers, non-commissioned officers, and men.

Each should feel that he is a member of an honourable profession, and endeavour to perform his duty in a becoming spirit. Officers and non-commissioned officers should command respect and obedience, in virtue of their professional knowledge and personal character, as well as of their official position. But unless men of good character and fair education can be induced to enter the service, it is idle to hope for such a desirable state of things.

Men of superior mental and physical qualifications are now more than ever wanted in the service; one reason why this should be so is very likely to escape notice. The British soldier when on foreign service meets with representatives of almost every race under the sun, and it is most desirable that the individual Englishman who, as a soldier, is thus brought into contact with these races, should possess those characteristics which have hitherto commanded the respect and admiration alike of friends and foes. Especially is this the case with regard to Oriental races, as to our *prestige* rather than to our numbers do we owe the vast influence and authority we exercise in the East.

In the consideration of our Indian military affairs, there is one subject that must not be lost sight of; this is the steady advance of Russia to our Indian frontier. Russia may be, and probably is, innocent of any design on our Indian empire, but just as two planets, when they come within a certain distance, have a disturbing influence on each other, so will the presence of Russia, even north of the Himalaya Mountains, have a perceptible effect on the fickle intriguing minds of our dusky fellow-subjects. The advance of that power is known and commented upon in every bazaar in India; and in the event of our being engaged in a European war, we could not even partially lessen our army there, without great risk.

How to get an army of reserve is the problem of the hour, which can only be solved by an organised system of compulsory military training. There is now a splendid opportunity for a War Minister to achieve distinction, and render the country safe and satisfied, if he would only go boldly to work and bring in a Bill to render physical education or military training (for the terms are convertible) compulsory. It is easy to understand why any public man, much less a Cabinet Minister, should hesitate to take such a step, as it would be a crucial test of his ability and popularity. But it must be taken by some one, and in the present temper of the country such a measure would be sure to pass.

Such an act need entail no hardship on any one, and individually the men so trained would benefit by it. In the opinion of many, this step would be a retrograde one, but it is hard to see how a nation can be retrograding when taking the precautionary measures that an individual citizen would take under similar circumstances; rather let us call it an act of national prudence.

We do not want to turn England into a vast camp, or otherwise

interfere with the peaceful pursuits of industry, or to live in a state of armed peace ; but we do want a sufficient number of citizen soldiers, with a practical working organisation that would make them a match for all comers. There is everything to encourage the reformer who will have the boldness to grapple with the subject, and make us strong in spite of ourselves.

As has been said already, the fact of our having something like half a million of men who have voluntarily submitted to a military training, is a proof that public spirit is not wanting.

Again, only last session our legislators encroached so far on the liberty of the subject, as to ordain that henceforth no man shall be allowed to bring up his children in debasing ignorance. This time-honoured privilege has been surrendered without a murmur. Now, by way of a sequel to the Education Bill, we want another enforcing physical education ; we must follow the example of our oldest universities, and make the cultivation of mind and muscle go together. A system of combined military and gymnastic training would be an advantage to all who participated in it. It would help to eradicate the loutishness of the agriculturalist, and improve the physique of the sedentary citizen.

In bringing these hints on army reform to a close, a few words may be permitted on the "purchase system."

It is a peculiarly British institution, and of considerable antiquity, as it existed in a modified form in the reign of Charles II. ; and although it was subsequently suppressed, it has had vitality enough to survive till the present. A system of purchasing promotion is alike at variance with the custom of foreign armies and with our own instincts in regard to other professions, and there is little doubt that the best interests of the service suffer by its continuance.

The simple fact of allowing a few thousand young gentlemen who have more money than brains, or having brains are too idle to use them, to join the service for a few years where perforce they must learn the rudiments of a military education, would be in itself a harmless proceeding if the mischief ended here. But as long as such a system lasts, it is not to be expected that officers will take seriously to the study of their profession. Indeed, to those who are rich the army is more of an amusement than a profession ; such men merely remain in it long enough to purchase a captaincy, majority, or colonelcy, when they marry or retire, or perhaps marry and retire.

And when such officers sell out, only those able to "shell out" can hope to succeed them. Thus the poor officer, however zealous or attached to his profession he may be, becomes at length weary and disgusted ; for he finds that to him the army is a sort of treadmill, in which, let him strive how he may, he can never ascend.

Gentlemen of fortune who merely come into the service for their own convenience, too often set a bad example to young officers of limited means, by their profuse expenditure, extravagant habits, and

inattention to the details of their profession ; the attempt of the latter to follow such examples too frequently leads to their professional ruin. There is no doubt that the junior ranks of commissioned officers are most inadequately paid ; to wealthy men this is of no importance, but if the purchase system is to be abolished, a subaltern's pay must be raised, so as to enable him to live decently on it. The insufficiency of the pay to meet their wants, is the principal reason why eligible non-commissioned officers are so little anxious for a commission ; in their case it would very often be like the gift of the white elephant. Non-commissioned officers might, however, be appointed subaltern officers in the reserve forces with great benefit to the service. If our reserve army is to assume any coherence and vitality, those dummy volunteer officers, who are such only in virtue of their social position, must either become qualified or resign, while lords-lieutenant of counties must surrender the patronage which it is no longer expedient they should enjoy.

It has been hinted in certain quarters that the commander-in-chief's lengthened reign at the Horse Guards is to be called in question. Civilians differ in their estimate of his qualifications for the office he holds, but in the army there is only one opinion as to his fitness and ability. The universal respect and esteem in which His Royal Highness is held by all ranks in the army, and its high state of discipline, is a sufficient proof that he has endeavoured to do his duty. And that he may long continue at the head of the British Army is the earnest wish of those serving in its ranks.

TO THE TIBER,

ON ITS LATE INUNDATION OF ROME.

WELL done, old Flood, that, hiding a clear eye
 Beneath thy yellow veil, dost wend among
 Those epic hills and dales of seven-topp'd song,
 To keep watch on the stone eternity
 Whereof the mortal tenants die and die ;
 One more is gone, the deadliest of the long
 Line, the foul vast of whose unmeasured wrong
 Trined to its summit in the triple Lie
 Of that thrice-curs'd Crown. And thou, brave flood,
 Enterest a thousand years of carrion
 To swill away the deeps of dung and blood,
 And drown the garbaged tribes that stank thereon,
 That so, at least, the new investiture
 Be on clean threshold and a hearth-stone pure.

SYDNEY DOBELL.